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Local Government Service

JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS

NOS. 7 & 8 VOL. XXV

JULY—AUGUST 1948

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GUIDE TO CONFERENCE DECISIONS

This number of "Local Government Service" is devoted entirely to reports of the Association's Annual Conference at Bournemouth, and of the meetings of particular groups of delegates held in conjunction with it. The more important decisions of Conference are summarised below. The numbers in brackets indicate the pages upon which the decisions referred to are reported. Other news of the Association's work, together with correspondence and all usual features, will appear in the September journal, to be published on September 1.

Conference Resolved to:

- ★ Renew its demand for energetic action to establish the Charter as a minimum (148);
- ★ Condemn as excessive the time taken by the National Joint Council to consider the bonus claim and ask the N.E.C. to accelerate claims procedure (153);
- ★ Reaffirm as its policy the conduct of negotiations through one national joint council for all local government officers (153);
- ★ Empower the N.E.C. to adapt the Association's machinery and rules to make more effective provision—but not separate divisions (144)—for members in the utility and health services (143);
- ★ Confirm that NALGO would continue to observe the provisions of the "Bridlington Scheme"—devised by the T.U.C. to prevent inter-union disputes (146);
- ★ Recommend cancellation of the agreement whereby certain electricity staffs may not be admitted to NALGO unless they had first joined the Electrical Power Engineers' Association (146, 147);
- ★ Approve the future educational policy set out in the Annual Report (154);
- ★ Reduce subscriptions of members on courses of training without pay or on sick leave (154);
- ★ Amend the rules so that Conference may at any time refer a matter to a ballot, the majority vote being binding upon the Association (153, 154);
- ★ Freeze the N.E.C. at its present size until 1950, when a new scheme for its election would be put forward (143);

It Instructed the N.E.C. to:

- ★ Hold a ballot of members on the question of affiliation to the T.U.C., and to affiliate if a majority of members voted in favour (144, 146);
- ★ Co-operate with comparable organisations to secure public recognition of the value of the black-coated worker (149);
- ★ Take steps to remove anomalies created by the Consolidation award (148);
- ★ Launch at once a strong campaign for rates of pay equal to those paid by big banks and insurance companies (141);
- ★ Urge the merger of the Scottish Joint Industrial Council with the National Joint Council for England and Wales (153);
- ★ Seek a revision of the English and Scottish Charters to provide 'General Division maxima at age 26 (149, 153);
- ★ Press for the payment of overtime to all Charter grades (150);
- ★ Negotiate an improved scale of holidays (150, 151);
- ★ Ask for the application of the 38-hour

week to those clerical officers not now enjoying it (150);

- ★ Begin at once a campaign for full equality for women (153);
- ★ Seek the inclusion in the Charter of a clause prohibiting the imposition of a marriage bar (152);
- ★ Claim that the three months within which an officer who has been informed of his grading must give notice of appeal, should be extended to one year where he is appointed to a newly-created post (152);
- ★ Effect an increase in the comparatively low salaries paid to senior officers of the new boards and accepted nothing lower than Charter scales for gas staffs (153);
- ★ Urge that, in future, all annual reports—favourable as well as adverse—be shown to officers concerned before submission to the local authority (151);
- ★ Call for immediate revision of the Charter educational provisions and the list of alternatives to the promotion examinations (154);
- ★ Secure the recognition of the intermediate examination of a recognised professional institute or university degree as equivalent to the promotion examination (152);
- ★ Recommend that the formation of local joint committees (153) and the recognition of examination successes be obligatory upon authorities (152);
- ★ Recommend the formation of a national joint council for staffs of water undertakings (154);
- ★ Adopt a more vigorous public relations policy designed to make the public conscious of the importance of local government (154);
- ★ Foster international understanding by promoting schemes for officers to work and spend holidays abroad (149);
- ★ Seek the amendment of the Children and Young Persons Act to make it obligatory on local authorities to make inquiries or take action in cases of child neglect (149, 150);
- ★ Consider the proposal that all items for Conference agenda be first submitted to district committees (154);
- ★ Put before the 1950 Conference proposals for reducing the number of delegates to Conference from then on (142, 154);

It Refused to:

- ★ Change NALGO's name (140, 141);
- ★ Press for a reduction in the number of Charter scales (148, 149);
- ★ Express lack of confidence in the N.E.C. over its handling of the consolidation claim (147, 148);
- ★ Ask the National Joint Council to make

a general revision of all grades (150), and to rescind clauses of the hospital stewards' scales which base salary on a code of "standard" duties (153);

- ★ Claim increased London "weighting" or higher overtime rates (150);
- ★ Demand the abolition of the promotion bar (151, 152);
- ★ Recommend separate grades for typists and machine operators (149);
- ★ Urge local authorities to review their establishments biennially (152, 153);
- ★ Ask the N.E.C. to formulate a national scheme for Saturday-morning leave (141, 142);
- ★ Alter the structure and methods of the Association in an endeavour to furnish the rank and file with more information on the progress of negotiations (153);
- ★ Agree to any change in the present method of representation on the N.E.C. (144, 154).

It Referred to the N.E.C.:

- ★ A suggestion to increase and redistribute its staff to speed up the handling of service conditions matters (142);
- ★ A claim for the inclusion of a cost-of-living clause in pension schemes affecting members (155);
- ★ A proposed schedule of the appropriate grading of special classes of officers according to age, qualifications, experience, and duties (150);
- ★ Plans to help electricity students by running courses and issuing certificates until a proper examination could be instituted (154);
- ★ A scheme for the cultural education of members by scholarships, week-end schools, and correspondence courses (154);
- ★ A proposal for a NALGO education institute to direct all the Association's educational work (154);
- ★ A plea for a larger allocation of paper for printing text-books (155);
- ★ Twenty motions and eleven amendments on the reduction to 56 of the age at which an officer may retire; pensions for officers' widows; amendment of the 1937 superannuation Act to provide terms as favourable as those of the new health service; action to safeguard the interests of members should local government undergo structural change; security of tenure; transfer of staffs to the civil service; leave of absence to attend Conference; ex-Servicemen's disability pensions; funds retained by branches; publication by the Benevolent Fund of its scale of allowances; holiday centres; formation of a statistical department and an appointments vacant bureau at Headquarters; research into salaries; and rations for staff canteens (155).

Blackcoats Will Have to Fight to Retain Their Status, Warns President

"The social ascendancy of the white collar over the worker's muffer has gone for ever," declared the President, Mr. C. J. NEWMAN, O.B.E., in his address to Conference. "The clerk and the collier are being weighed in the scale of social value and who tips the scale is, for us, as the largest union of black-coated workers, a matter of supreme importance."

I MUST warn you at the outset, said the President, that my address may be somewhat different from those of my predecessors, if only because I differ from them in race, religion, and social philosophy. I would not be honest if I did not freely confess that such differences must reflect themselves in the views I express to you—which, after all, are essentially personal, even in a Presidential address.

One difference which will be welcome is that it will be shorter than usual—I hope! We Scots are men of few words—sometimes—except of course on those Saturday nights when "Glesca belongs" to us. Another, that I will not attempt to review the work of the past year. I will let the Annual Report speak for itself, save to mention one or two outstanding points. The first of these must surely be the further increase in our membership—an influx of 24,000, double that of last year, giving us a new record of 170,960. Perhaps I cannot quite speak of "a year of continuous achievement," as my predecessor did last year, when I remember Award 1051 of the National Arbitration Tribunal and look at items 72 to 92 on the Agenda.

Let us face that straight away. We have had a serious setback; we are disappointed, disillusioned, disgruntled, and at Hazel Grove and Bramhall and at Sunderland we are gnashing our teeth and pouring out the vials of our wrath on the N.E.C. By all means let us have criticism and plenty of it—that is the essence of democracy, but it is equally of the essence of democracy that there remains a measure of trust between elector and elected—that the elected cannot give of his best in delicate and difficult negotiations if he is hamstrung by rigid directions that leave no room for honest and discerning discretion (cheers). After all, the ultimate democratic remedy for the dissatisfied elector is the ballot box and not bullets—whether verbal or more lethal. We have just applied that remedy, and the consequent blood transfusion has brought to the N.E.C. a liberal measure of new blood—and some London ginger!—which presumably should cure the pernicious anaemia which some critics have diagnosed; though personally I rather doubt the diagnosis—looking at the complexions of my colleagues on the platform, not excluding my own.

Claims Must Be Justified

Even in this matter, vital as it is for so many of our members, let us keep our sense of proportion. This is not the first setback NALGO has met with, nor even the most serious in the long, uphill struggle we have waged together these many years. Ask the fighters for superannuation of the many setbacks they suffered—of the heartbreaks and the frustration they encountered. Were they discouraged? Never, and the fight went on and several battles were lost before the final victory was won. So will it be again—if we can justify our claims, and I repeat that—if we can justify our claims, for on that I would like to say a few words which may not be wholly palatable, but I want us all to face

The background of the Arbitration Award is the economic circumstances of the country as set out in the Economic Survey, and the White Paper, and the wage policy of the Government, which stipulates higher production as the only justification for higher wages in present circumstances. Can we seriously quarrel with that if we are realists, and have we faced up fairly and squarely to the challenge that is made to us, in common with all other workers, for higher production—a greater output from the working week of 38 hours? I leave that question with you.

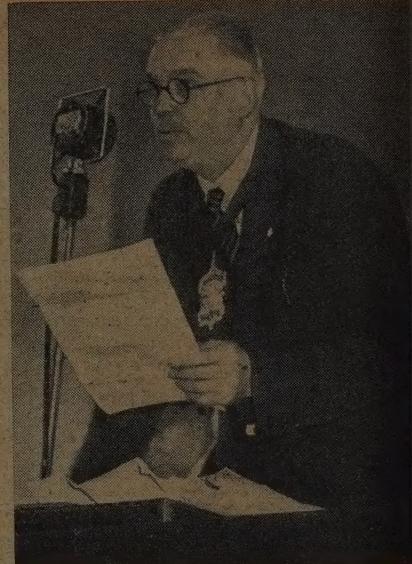
You may say: "that is all very well, but meanwhile our wage standards are being lowered in relation to other workers and we are losing our accustomed place in the scale," and I would reply that in my considered view that is precisely the real danger we are facing, and we may have to fight very hard to retain our former position vis-à-vis the industrial worker.

"Age of the Common Man"

You and I have been brought up in a world which recognised without question the social ascendancy of the white collar over the worker's muffer and its undisputed right to a preferential salary. Have we realised that that world has gone for ever—buried in the avalanche of two catastrophic wars—that the late President Roosevelt's phrase "the age of the common man" is literally true and that, whether we like it or not, it involves a complete revaluation of the worth of human work? The clerk and the collier are being weighed in the scale of social value, and who tips the scale is for us, as the largest union of blackcoat workers, a matter of supreme importance. Stripped of our former privilege, we have to weigh ounce for ounce in the social value of human endeavour, and our reward for clerical work will be measured accordingly—no more and no less.

In the light of these considerations, I repeat again—if we can justify our claims, not only in relation to other clerical workers, but in relation to all other industrial workers who have at last found a place in the sun. I would add that it might be well for us to be having a say in this process of revaluation of the worth of work (cheers) which I doubt whether we are having at present in our splendid isolation.

If we are to justify our claims it means that we must establish the worth of our work in public estimation, and there our public relations department can help. The ex-President graphically illustrated its value last year in his striking description of local government as "Britain's best bargain at 4s. 0d. a week." I cannot add to that except to emphasise that the great machine of local government depends for its smooth working and maximum output as much on the smallest cog of the office-boy as on the big wheel of the chief officer that drives the dynamo (cheers). That means, too, that for each of us our work must be worthwhile in the measure of satisfaction and the sense of self-



Mr. C. J. NEWMAN

fulfilment that it gives to each of us—even the most humble. It is perhaps the greatest need in our modern society that all should find happiness in their work as something spiritual value, and not merely a job that has to be done for a certain wage or salary. Work is a divine vocation, while employment is an economic necessity—and what a world of difference between the two! If we do our job only for the pay packet attached to it, do assure you that we shall miss the real savour of life—the sense of personal satisfaction, of continuous self-fulfilment, the springs from work well done as distinct from mere employment.

Comradeship in Work

I believe it to be profoundly true as I repeat the other day "that the will to work is inherent in the healthy individual" and that the lack of it is seldom his or her fault, but more generally the "climate of the work." This is a new phrase to me and perhaps to you, but I do not think it needs much explaining. The personal relations with our fellow-workers and, even more important, those of workers with management—not so much by mentality and much more of the collegial and much more, too, of the spirit of partnership in a joint enterprise. The great need to-day, and again I quote, "is so to change the climate of the work as to allow the natural enthusiasm of the individual and the group to develop to the full." In this field we can proudly claim that NALGO has been a pioneer from the first conception of its aims, embracing membership from top to bottom of the service, to its constant fostering of the spirit of comradeship amongst all ranks which creates a congenial climate of work. For us it is comparatively easy, for most of us have a personal job to do, and very few of us, I am glad to think, are tied to the machine, although so far as I know the slavery of the motor belt has not yet degraded even the most mechanised of treasurer's departments.

I am old-fashioned, if you like, in believing with Robert Louis Stevenson that "to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labour"—above all

to labour in the fruitful field in which we are engaged—the service of the community; than which there is no higher service save the service of God, and—for Christians—the two are one.

"Our Precious Unity"

Whatever the changes of structure made by legislation or by boundary commissions, for us it will remain the service of the community, whether it be carried out under the auspices of a "regional board," a "one-tier county," a "two-tier county," a "new county borough," or a "new county district," and in my view it may well present to us fresh and wider opportunities of useful public service, and without detriment to the quantity, quality, or status of local government officers, which will be guarded as always by our Association and guarded successfully if we but maintain our essential unity and our strength of purpose. I would venture a word of warning on that all important, unique and precious unity of ours which is and has been our greatest strength. Changes there may have to be in our machinery, and possibly, too, in our structure, to meet changing conditions, but let us ponder very deeply before we do anything that will tend to sectionalise, graduate, or classify our membership (cheers), for in my view that is the downward path to disintegration.

Changing conditions we certainly have to meet, but for myself, as a local government officer, I welcome the brave new world with its fuller measure of social justice and social service (hear, hear!), and am glad to have a share in its making, and its working. In certain quarters planning is being pooh-poohed; yet what would the ordinary citizen of this country have done in the days of bomb and blast but for the planning of devoted local government officers? (cheers.) Again controls are condemned root and branch; yet most of us have spent our official lives in administering controls of one kind or another. It is certainly true that, in essence, only one control is really necessary in human life, and that is self-control, but unfortunately it is just the absence of that one that breeds all the others (cheers). My experience leads me to believe that the people who rail most against controls in these days of shortage are often those who want more than their fair share (loud cheers) of profit or produce—and mean to have it.

NALGO War Memorial

Two other matters I wish to mention briefly.

The first is Knole Lodge, here in Bournemouth—our war memorial convalescent home. I have spoken of justice, but now it is a question of charity, and charity is greater than justice. The appeal was for £40,000; £6. 0d. per head—less than the price of two packets of cigarettes—and the figure to date, I am sorry to say, is only £29,000. I would only ask this of those who have not yet subscribed: is it really the NALGO spirit not to pay our debts—to forget the debt we owe our dead within three short years of the peace and safety they won for us? (Hear, hear!)

Let me recall to you those immortal words of Laurence Binyon.

*"They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them."*

"We will remember them." Have we re-

membered them? I just ask you to look and see if this appeal cannot be met in full.

The other matter is quite different: the question of affiliation to the Trades Union Congress. You will appreciate that it would not be proper for me to discuss the merits of the question while presiding over this Conference, though I confess that I am sorry to be out of the arena on that account—and only on that account, I assure you! Nevertheless, as one who has taken some part in previous debates and as the mover of the motion last year and a member of the delegation that met the representatives of the Trades Union Congress, I feel entitled to say this, if only to explain my personal position. I agree with paragraph 9 of the Annual Report on page 15, except that in my view it contains just three letters too many. If you will look at page 15 and the end of paragraph 6 you will follow what I mean. [Paragraph 6 states

that the N.E.C. has explored the possibility of affiliation without implying allegiance to or connection with any political party, and found that, in its opinion, such an object "cannot be achieved."] I should omit the three letters "n-o-t" in the phrase "cannot be achieved" at the end of that paragraph—only three letters, but a whole alphabet of difference! Whether it should be achieved or not, and how that is to be decided, are matters for you to settle at this Conference.

And that, ladies and gentlemen, you will be glad to hear, is the end of my alphabet this morning. In conclusion, I would only repeat that I welcome the "challenge of our times" and declare my unfaltering faith in the ability of our local government service to meet it in full measure—strengthened, inspired, and vitalised by the growing power and influence of our great Association (loud and prolonged cheers).

Benevolent and Orphan Fund's Record Year: Income £38,799 : Expenditure £34,397

INCOME of the NALGO Benevolent and Orphan Fund last year reached the record total of £38,799—£4,184 more than in the previous year. Of this total, £24,230 came from members' subscriptions, £8,461 from donations from districts, branches, and other sources, £1,163 from life membership fees, £1,127 from the sale of Christmas cards, and £3,818 in interest on investments.

The Fund spent £26,549 in grants to beneficiaries, £1,556 in providing holidays for those who would otherwise have been unable to enjoy them, £2,032 in grants to war orphans, and £774 in convalescent home fees. Administration cost £3,486, leaving a surplus for the year of £4,402.

Every year trophies are presented to the districts achieving the highest contributions per head of membership, and diplomas of merit to those branches whose aggregate contributions since they started collecting for the fund have reached £1,000. These, presented by the Mayor of Bournemouth at the opening of Conference, were awarded this year as follows:

TROPHIES

1. SIR HOMWOOD CRAWFORD Shield—Eastern (£2,217, equal to 5s. 1½d. per member)
2. VISCOUNT WAKEFIELD Shield—North Eastern (£1,936, equal to 4s. 10d. per member)
3. "BRIDLINGTON" Cup—North Western (£6,292, equal to 4s. 3½d. per member).

DIPLOMAS OF MERIT

Hertfordshire	£1,126	Lancaster	£1,043
Accrington	£1,081	Buckinghamshire	£1,033
West Bromwich	£1,076	Pontypridd	£1,024
Lytham St. Annes	£1,067	Aberdeen	£1,020
Action	£1,046		

Contributions from other districts were:

District	Total	Members	Per Head
East Midland	£2,054	10,944	3s. 9d.
Metropolitan	£5,767	30,452	3s. 9½d.
Scottish	£2,218	13,754	3s. 3d.
South Eastern	£2,057	10,261	4s. 0d.
Southern	£1,686	8,227	4s. 1d.
South Wales	£1,619	7,762	4s. 2d.
South Western	£1,904	10,143	3s. 9d.
West Midland	£2,511	16,371	3s. 1d.
Yorkshire	£3,477	17,058	4s. 1d.

Branches which passed a further £1,000 mark during the year were:

Sheffield	£9,148	Somerset	£3,061
Liverpool	£8,334	Durham County	£2,200
Leeds	£6,081	Lanarkshire	£2,066
Glasgow	£4,218	Willesden	£2,055
Bolton	£4,059	Huddersfield	£2,037
Newcastle-on-Tyne	£4,009	Portsmouth	£2,017
		Essex County	£2,003

Commenting on the results in his address to Conference, R. T. SHEARS, chairman of the Benevolent & Orphan Fund committee, paid special tribute to the winner of the Sir Homewood Crawford Shield, the Eastern district, who were runners-up last year and had always had an excellent record, and to the North Eastern district, who had won a trophy every year since 1942 and provided the artists of the Christmas cards sold for the Fund. The North Western district had also done

well: it was not easy for a big district to gain a prize, and its contribution of over £6,200 had never been approached before (cheers).

Applications for grants were rapidly increasing, Mr. Shears told Conference, and in three districts payments greatly exceeded contributions. Notwithstanding its record contribution, payments in the North Western district, for example, exceeded income by about £2,000. The Fund had ample reserves, and would use them, if necessary, but if overspending spread to other districts it would need sustained effort to break even.

It was the aim of the fund to deal with all cases of need with speed and generosity. The new State grants available after July 5 would relieve the Fund to some extent, and it was intended to make considerable improvements in grants.

J. H. ROBINSON, honorary treasurer, also referred to the fund in his address to Conference. "I endorse wholeheartedly what Mr. Shears has said," he declared, "and I ask you to continue your efforts. The average subscription is only about 3s. 10d. per member, and it does not include the whole membership by a long way. Do not be put off by the National Insurance Act. I see the hard cases which come to be dealt with—and I know that he gives twice who gives quickly. None of us knows how closely we walk in the shadow of adversity. In many of the tragic cases that I see, the men concerned might have said, a few years ago: 'It can't happen to me.' But it has happened—and it may happen to any one of us. If it does, we have here something which can give us speedy aid. If it does not, it is worth a few shillings to help those who need it."

Eleven Members in King's Birthday Honours

THE names of at least eleven members of NALGO appeared in the King's Birthday Honours in June. Those reported to Headquarters are given below:

O.B.E.

F. E. HARRISON, M.C., M.A., chief education officer, Blackpool, branch president-elect; A. B. GRIFFITHS, F.I.M.T.A., F.S.A.A., city treasurer, Sheffield.

G. L. A. DOWNING, M.I.C.E., A.M.I.Mech.E., borough engineer and surveyor, Hackney; Major S. H. MORGAN, M.C., M.I.C.E., lately borough surveyor, Rochdale (retired);

H. J. PAUL, M.I.C.E., chief engineer, Yorkshire Ouse Catchment Board.

M.B.E.

E. BOWER, assistant relieving officer, Lincoln; hon. welfare officer, Lincolnshire area, S.S.A.F.A.

C. R. MOSS, chief sanitary inspector and chief salvage officer, Brighouse;

H. E. G. WILLIAMS, master, Bucklow Hospital, Knutsford, Cheshire, President NALGO E.

C. H. OSBOURNE, area welfare officer, L.C.C.;

H. HEAP, chief clerk, Westmorland county education committee.

B.E.M.

Mrs. F. W. SWANN, collector, Coventry savings group.

Call to Members to Increase Efficiency of Service and Solve Administrative Problems

Outstanding among Conference speeches was that by JOHN EDWARDS, O.B.E., M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, who, after commending NALGO's work in service conditions, education, and public relations, urged it to harness the ideas and enterprise of members in increasing the efficiency and productivity of the service and helping to solve the many problems of public administration.

Mr. Edwards told Conference of his pleasure at having the opportunity, on behalf of the Government, to say a sincere "Thank you," to the staffs of local authorities for the splendid work they had done, and to express his appreciation of the friendly and co-operative relationship between NALGO and the Ministry of Health.

They were to-day witnessing profound changes in local government, paralleling those of 100 years ago, and he felt glad to be alive in such stirring times and to have a part to play in this great social revolution. The changes in social security represented the application of the "good neighbour principle" on a national scale. "In the Health Service," Mr. Edwards continued, "we shall depend utterly on the skill and devotion of the people who are going to work in it, and we at the Ministry of Health have been much concerned to see whether we could arrange a comprehensive system through which negotiations could take place. I know how well organised you have been in the local government service, and it was my wish, and the wish of my Minister, that the new Health Service should start off with a properly co-ordinated Whitley system, covering the whole service, and that we should not wait for years of difficulty before setting up the right kind of machine."

Value of Whitley Spirit

"I was therefore anxious that we should have a system which would give us not only the channels through which grievances should be ventilated and conditions of service negotiated, but also a system by which those who worked in the service could make their contribution to its efficiency and well-being. I know from my own experience as the general secretary of a trade union that there are things which the people who are doing the work know which no one else knows in the same sense, and that no service can be properly efficient unless it harnesses the ideas and the enterprise of the people who are actually at work on the job."

"There were some eighty different associations involved in this public health field, but we have now reached the final stage, and one of the Councils, that for the administrative and clerical side, has had its first meeting. Your Association has helped us enormously. You have representation on four of the Councils, and I should like to pay my tribute to the great help which we have had from Mr. Warren, Mr. Corser, Mr. Davis, and others in setting up this new machinery."

"I want it to be more than a machine. I know that, at its best, the Whitley spirit can indeed produce great results, in the sense that there should be a dominant disposition to agree and a real desire to make the system work to the mutual advantage of both sides" (cheers).

Appeal to Valuation Officers

In addition to the Health Service, Mr. Edwards continued, there had recently been put on the Statute Book the Local Government Act, 1948, which provided for valuation work to be centralised under the Board of Inland Revenue. He hoped that this change-over would come into effect next year. It would be a considerable undertaking, and the Inland Revenue would not be able to achieve its objects unless it had a quick and whole-hearted response from those at present engaged in valuation work. That work could be done only by those who were doing it now.

In the all-important matter of training local government officers, NALGO had played a prominent part, and, apart possibly from the union of which he used to be general secretary [the Post Office Engineering Union] nobody had done better. When, in 1946, the National Joint Council produced its scheme, it was clear that

NALGO had a large say in it. The Minister commended that scheme to local authorities because it was his desire to make the local government service as attractive and as efficient as possible. All public services depended on the quality of the people engaged in them, and there was nothing more important than proper systems of training.

He wished to compliment the Association also on the pioneering work it had done in the field of public relations. The NALGO Report on Relations between Local Government and the Community had really broken new ground and the Consultative Committee on Local Government Publicity, of which he was chairman, in its own first report issued last autumn, had done little more than say again what NALGO had already said.

"I regard it as of the highest importance," Mr. Edwards declared, "that everyone who works in local government or related services should be public relations conscious and should recognise that he or she is a servant of the community, and that the community has the right not merely to have service but to know as much as possible about the service."

He was tempted, he continued, before such an audience, to look into the future of local government. He had compared the second Report of the Boundary Commission with the report of the NALGO Reconstruction Committee issued in 1943—and while, at first sight, those two reports seemed to be poles apart, a more detailed reading showed that they were not so widely separated.

As to what might happen, he would hazard the personal view that there might be a repetition of what happened in the last century—first, procedure *ad hoc*, inspired by pent-up and strong social feelings, then a tidying-up process. When the process of transfer had been completed, they would have to tackle the difficult job of thinking of areas and authorities, and produce a new system which fitted the present distribution of functions. He hoped that all in the local government service would study and argue about the question, so that, when the time came, they would have a large body of informed opinion to help in what was bound to be an unpopular task.

Social Research Needed

Referring to the President's remarks in his address about productivity or efficiency in the service, Mr. Edwards pointed out that, while it was stupid to judge expenditure on local services to be wrong if it reached a certain height—since everything depended on what the ratepayer or taxpayer was getting for his money—there was a limit to the expansion of the social services—set by the capacity of productive industry to provide enough for itself and for all the people not engaged in productive industry. Staffs of the social services could be expanded only if they got increasing productivity from fewer directly-productive workers.

It was important, therefore, for those in the social services to ensure that they did not waste labour and energy, and he would like to see this attitude adopted towards both local and central government. They should consider whether there were ways of doing things which were more efficient and more economical (in the sense of not wasting resources) than those which they had at present.

In this connection, he urged much greater scientific attention to the problems of public administration. Many of the problems facing the world to-day arose because we had not found ways of matching our technical skills and our social skills. We still did not know how to work and live together. This was a matter not of intuitive insight, but of social research, and anything that NALGO could do to study the problems of public administration on their own merits, and to do in this field what was being done so well in the medical field, would advance not only the



Mr. JOHN EDWARDS, M.P.

credit of the Association but also the status and well-being of the local government service.

"Your Association," Mr. Edwards concluded, "is pre-eminent amongst all the bodies concerned with local government, and has played an important part in securing and maintaining an efficient administration. In the reconstruction programme of the Government, the social services are being greatly extended, and, although certain services have been or are being transferred from local authorities to the State, there is little cause to fear that local government officials will be left idle. On the contrary, the importance of their work to the welfare of the community will increase, and the reorganisation and extension of local services will call for still greater efforts."

"The complexity of the task of local authorities can be surmounted only by an efficient local government service. The Government may plan, councils may pass resolutions, but the success of all these schemes depends in the long run on the individual officer, whether high or low in the hierarchy, who works in the offices of a local authority. It is therefore essential that every person in local government should feel that he has an important part to play, and that he has a real share in and a real responsibility for the great work of local government, which affects every individual at every stage of life."

A Great Age

"I congratulate the Association on the work it has done. I look forward to continued co-operation on the friendly basis already established between the Ministry I represent and your Association. I am very glad to be here to-day to thank, through you, all those up and down the country who work for our great local authorities. I looked forward to an ever-increasing contribution from your side to the problems of management, as well as in the narrower field of your own interests. It is remarkable what can be done when men and women in a profession apply their minds and hearts to the doing of it. We live in a great age. We are instituting social changes of which all our people are entitled to be proud, and those of us who have a share in them must bear a special responsibility, but may, I hope, deserve special credit" (loud cheers).

Delegates had heard Mr. Edwards with absorbed attention and the President summed up their feelings when, in thanking him, he commented on the refreshing and stimulating experience of finding a member of the Government so sympathetic an interest and insight into local government problems. That understanding would evoke a whole-hearted response, and all members of the Association would do their utmost to see that the social services were administered with humanity and efficiency.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1948

AN OBSERVER of annual conferences, writing in the "Manchester Guardian" recently, drew attention to the curious contradiction in the behaviour of a body of people in collective assembly and of the same people individually. "It is a matter of common observation," he wrote, "that a gathering of clergymen generates an air of arch mischief, while one of railwaymen is relentlessly statesmanlike. . . . Lawyers tend to collective gloom, schoolmasters to a sort of unruly gaiety, undertakers are serenely cheerful, authors ruthlessly businesslike, while collective housewives, as we well know, are inclined to be fierce."

"The group," he concluded, "tends to react against the accepted characteristics of the individual within it. Nothing can be more solemn (to take another example) than a gathering of variety artists. Civil servants in conference commonly use terse, forthright language of a kind that is rarely produced at their desks, while journalists are inclined to grow diffuse . . ."

Docile Delegates

He did not, alas, include local government officers among his examples, but the N A L G O Conference at Bournemouth would undoubtedly have confirmed his general conclusion. The agenda suggested that, individually, local government officers to-day are violently critical of their leaders, fiercely aggressive, and seething with discontent: it was packed with motions "demanding" this, "deploring" that, recording its "serious concern" expressing its "complete and entire dissatisfaction," viewing with grave apprehension," censuring the National Executive Council for one thing and denying its right to do another. Yet, in the event, delegates proved as docile as one would expect to find a conference of curates, at one stage even racing one another to the microphone to withdraw notices of motion critical of their elected leaders!

True, the leaders did not have it all their own way. More than once, Conference flatly rejected their advice and adopted motions or amendments they had opposed or threw out propositions they had favoured: but even these minor rebellions were conducted with such apologetic good humour, such laughter from the floor and answering smiles from the platform, as to give the impression that delegates were no more than engagingly wayward children playfully teasing an indulgent parent.

How different from the past, when, if we are to believe the tales of the ancients, N A L G O Conferences resounded to the clash of combat, the N.E.C. cowered before the thunder of indignant delegates, and branch Ajaxes defied the lightning flashes from the platform! Is it that N A L G O members have indeed grown more docile with the years? Or, accepting the principle of collective contrariness advanced by the "Manchester Guardian" correspondent, is it that members, formerly meek individually and aggressive only in assembly, to-day disguise their real belligerence beneath a mask of collective tolerance and good humour? We must leave it to others to solve the

mystery, and content ourselves by letting the record speak for itself.

Notwithstanding the bright sunshine outside and the promise of a glorious day, the Winter Gardens was packed at 9.30 on June 15 for the opening of Conference. Delegates found a spacious hall, well lit, with ample and comfortable seating, and equipped with a loud speaker system that really worked (except towards the N.E.C. who, perched somewhat self-consciously on the platform normally occupied by the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, found themselves often guessing at the words of a speaker from the emotion shown by the back of his neck or the laughter, cheers, or impatience of his audience).

After delegates had approved the minutes of the Southport Conference—but not before H. W. PENDRILL, Woolwich, had unsuccessfully challenged the accuracy of one of them—they welcomed the Mayor of Bournemouth, Councillor J. W. Moore, who in turn welcomed him to his smiling town—N A L G O 's second visit there in 21 years. One of the joys of occupying the position of mayor, he said, was the kindness, consideration, and desire to be helpful shown him by all members of the staff, and he was sure all members of local authorities were deeply grateful for the assistance given by their officers. The motive for that helpfulness was not entirely selfish, and it was refreshing to find, at a time when there was far too much selfishness in the world, an organisation like N A L G O , whose members were out to give good service to all with whom they came in contact. (cheers).

The President, C. J. NEWMAN, O.B.E., thanked the Mayor for his demonstration of "that sympathetic spirit which, when shown by employing authorities, draws the best out of their officers," and invited the Mayoress, Mrs. Moore, to present Benevolent and Orphan Fund trophies and diplomas and the sports trophies. These are listed on other pages.

Then followed Mr. Shears' review of Benevolent and Orphan Fund progress and the President's Address, both reported elsewhere, and a vote of thanks to the President, graciously moved by A. C. TEMPLEMAN, vice-chairman of the South-Western district committee and carried with acclamation, after which the President called upon JOHN EDWARDS, O.B.E., M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, whose speech is reported on the opposite page.

TREASURER'S REVIEW

Statistics With a Smile

Conference agreed to an amendment of rule to defer the declaration of the results of the N.E.C. elections until the annual report had been disposed of, approved the appointment of auditors and scrutineers, and then settled down with an air of happy expectancy to the honorary treasurer's annual report—normally one of the dullest items of any business meeting, but, since J. H. ROBINSON became honorary treasurer, the highlight of N A L G O 's proceedings.

Delegates were not disappointed. Mr. Robinson's dry wit scintillated as brightly as ever and as, with grave face, he illuminated the Association's financial affairs with a rapid fire of extempore wisecracks—impossible, alas, to reproduce in this

curtailed report—they sat back and chuckled for forty minutes.

All delegates, said Mr. Robinson, had had the accounts in the usual little white booklet, and no doubt all had given them their usual attention. Though one had been heard to say, "Why have they sent me one of these? I got one last year" (laughter), he assured Conference that, though the style, format, and printing were the same, the booklet contained a set of figures which had never been used before at any other Conference.

The first item in the Association's finances was the cost of administration. At the time of the Charter, the staff numbered 214, and, after the Charter had been applied, salaries rose to £55,000. Now, the staff numbered 249, and salaries were £85,000. Before the Charter, the trade union share of salaries took about 35 per cent. of subscription income; to-day, eliminating the extra income which had come through added membership, the cost of salaries still took 30 per cent. He did not think that N A L G O was over-staffed at Headquarters, nor that its officers were over-paid, and he mentioned the point because if, in a small organisation like N A L G O , there were these tendencies to increasing salary-bills, that might explain some of the difficulties encountered by N A L G O negotiators when putting claims to the employers.

District organisation, excluding salaries, had cost £12,186. This was made up of fares and subsistence allowances, about £2,700; car allowances, about £2,000; office expenses, about £6,500; and about £1,000 representing the difference, paid by the Association, between the cost of houses for district officers, which the Association, mainly in its own interest, had bought at enhanced market prices, and the reasonable tenant's rent it asked them to pay.

Value of Education Work

Education had cost £4,526, compared with £3,647 in 1947, and he understood that the education committee was considering the development of its policy. For many years there had been a lack of the coming man with the requisite specialised knowledge to handle the job becoming vacant. The weekly lists of advertisements for posts well below those of chief officers showed the need for more educational work: it should be possible to fill many of these vacancies from qualified men "on the spot" (hear! hear!).

Printing and publishing LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE last year cost £11,850, compared with £10,701 in 1947. He thought the Journal was one of which the Association could be proud. It was informative, the articles were good, the criticisms pungent, and there was a certain amount of humour which he always enjoyed. If members alleged that there was a shortage of information, they should be told that the Association circulated last year more than 1,500,000 copies and used 83 tons of paper—all that the Paper Controller would allow it to have.

Turning to the income side, membership had grown in two years by 36,596 to 170,960—a record in the history of N A L G O . He was told that this very large number consisted to a large extent now, and from July 5 would still more

Reserves Now £182,000—and Treasurer Asks for More

largely consist, of several tribes wandering in the wilderness, a multitude of political refugees, and a mass of displaced persons (laughter); but they had every reason to hope that, at least until 1950, there would be a small residue of local government officers.

The assistant honorary treasurer—the editor of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE—(laughter) had drawn attention, on the cover of the May issue, to the quantum of the annual subscription, £1 5s. 9d. per head. Ignoring the surplus, this showed, broadly, that 10s. went for Headquarters' purposes and 10s. for branch and district purposes; but, taking it all together at 26s., NALGO was giving trade unionism for six-pence a week—and what was sixpence? In this

Robinson recalled that two years ago he had deplored the fact that while, figuratively speaking, the Association had large reserves, practically, they were tied up in bricks and mortar. Today, net value of about £97,000 and liquid assets worth £85,000, making a total of £182,000. The reserves were now in the proportion of 55 per cent. liquid to 45 per cent. tied up in property—a much better position.

Summing up, he suggested that the accounts represented the financial reflex of a very successful year. Conference should not be impatient about the present rates of subscription because there was a surplus. NALGO had got more members, but it had not yet "delivered the goods" they were entitled to have, and to do so would cost money.

"I hope," Mr. Robinson concluded, "that you will follow the policy which I have recommended to you; to increase your reserves and to make them more liquid, so that, whatever the future may bring, whether we have to prosecute our claim to those things to which we have a right, or for those things that we should like to have, or even to resist aggression against those things that we already enjoy, we may be in a position to say that there was no cause neglected, no struggle abandoned and no battle lost because we lacked financial resources to carry on to a successful end" (loud and prolonged cheers).

NO TIME-SAVING DEVICES

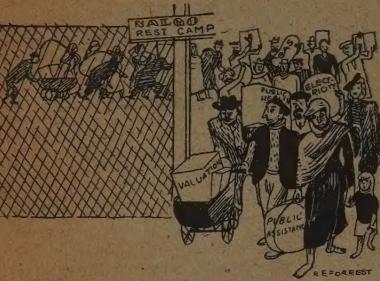
Two Proposals Rejected

Conference adopted the accounts, and after L. J. BARRELL, borough treasurer, Colchester, had moved a vote of thanks to the honorary treasurer, proceeded to the first branch motion on the agenda. This, moved by R. S. GRAY, Norwich, suggested that it would save time were the N.E.C. to give its opinion upon each motion and amendment before Conference discussed it.

For the N.E.C., L. H. TAYLOR expressed doubt of the meaning of the motion. Did Norwich, he asked, want the N.E.C., before a motion was voted on, to say merely whether it supported or opposed it, or did it want the N.E.C. also to give reasons for its attitude? The latter course might be regarded as an interference with the democratic functions of delegates. Nevertheless, there might be some merit in the motion, and he suggested that it be referred to the Council for examination and report. But Conference would have none of it, rejecting the motion by a substantial majority.

Another move to save time followed from R. D. WHITLAM, Bermondsey, who suggested that the N.E.C., through the agenda committee, should bracket motions or amendments of similar character and content to form one composite motion or amendment and submit, at the opening of each morning session, an order paper for the day. This would spare Conference the discussion of many motions and amendments differing only slightly from one another and allow it to concentrate on the main issues.

Again, L. H. TAYLOR, for the N.E.C.—after pointing out that the agenda committee already bracketed motions and amendments—suggested that the proposal be referred to the Council for consideration; but, again, Conference preferred



"Membership largely consists of . . . a mass of displaced persons"

world of managed currencies, mismanaged currencies, inflation, and deflation, the British sixpence was worth the huffence of anybody's money.

One pleasing feature of the Charter was that it had produced greater subscriptions—about £40,000 this year. If there were delegates who were going to receive promotion he hoped they would be able to follow the example of an eminent gentleman elsewhere who had recently been promoted, and pay their levy "with a song in their hearts," even if their promotion, like his, was merely from the general to a miscellaneous group (laughter).

He had been surprised to find that the Croyde Bay holiday centre showed a surplus for the year of £1,409, and Cayton Bay a deficiency of £2,054. Cost per visitor per week worked out at 79s. 5d. at Croyde against 96s. 6d. at Cayton. This difference of 17s. 1d. called, he thought, for some investigation. The special activities committee was alive to the position.

Coming from Leeds (formerly a severe critic of holiday camps), Mr. Robinson added that he was biased about them: he wanted to see them the best, the cheapest, and the most popular in the country. To help the special activities committee, the N.E.C. had given it a loan of £75,000 and a fair amount of administrative freedom to spend that money without first obtaining sanction. In future, there were to be no subsidies from and no contributions to the General Fund: if the holiday camps made a profit, it was to be ploughed back.

Discussing the balance sheet as a whole, Mr.



J. H. ROBINSON—with grave face and a rapid fire of extempore wisecracks

to reject it outright—whereupon Southall withdrew its proposal that "comment in editorial columns" on notices of motion should be replaced by a statement of N.E.C. policy.

Delegates showed equal impatience with Manchester's proposal, moved by A. F. HUTT, to amend the rules to allow of a card vote on the demand of 25 instead of 50 delegates, evidently agreeing with J. H. TYRELL, N.E.C., that there should be no difficulty in getting fifty delegates to demand a card vote for a motion which justified it, and rejecting the motion.

A NEW NAME FOR NALGO? N.E.C. Proposing to Find One

Nor was the Northmet branch more successful with its motion proposing that, now that the Association catered for the clerical and administrative staffs of public utility and nationalised services, it should change its name to the "National Association of Public Service Officers." Moving this, N. A. WARDLE said that, since 1946, NALGO had admitted to membership many public utility employees who were not local government officers and never would be, while to-day many members were being transferred from local government to nationalised services—with the result that, ultimately, as much as 50 per cent. of the Association's members might be outside local government. The suggested change of name would bring home to all that NALGO now catered for employees in the nationalised industries, and that should help the recruiting campaign. Unity was paramount, and retention of the present name might provide a cause of disunity.

After C. FIRTH, Blackpool, had moved an amendment to substitute "Union" for "Association" in the proposed new title, L. H. TAYLOR for the N.E.C., opposed any change at present. The Council, he assured Conference, realised that there must be a change in the not distant future, but it did not wish to be rushed into it. The name "NALGO" had built up for itself a tremendous goodwill value, which should not lightly be thrown away in the heat of Conference (hear! hear!). When a change was made, they must be sure that no further alteration would be required, and that the new name would carry with it the same goodwill as had attached to the present one. The N.E.C. intended itself, as soon as possible, to suggest a name which it was hoped would meet with general agreement and would endure, and in the meantime it opposed both motion and amendments.



Delegates . . . sat back and chuckled for forty minutes

"Hitch Salaries Wagon to Bank and Insurance Stars"

Conference rejected both the Blackpool amendment, and a second one, moved by L. F. WARDEN, Banstead, advocating that the new name be "Association of National and Local Government Officers," whereupon T. J. METCALFE, Smeathwick, withdrew a further amendment by his branch and Hammersmith, suggesting the title "National and Local Government Officers' Association."

But Mr. Wardle refused to give up the fight, and, claiming his right of reply, pointed out that it was in the transition period that recruitment took place. Potential members often said: "This is a local government association. Why should we join it?" His branch agreed that it was desirable to find a title which would retain the old goodwill, if possible, but if the search meant delaying a change until other unions had obtained the members, the advantage of the change would be lost. Conference, however, preferred to wait, and rejected the motion.

NEW SALARIES TARGET Call for "Strong Campaign"

It was with greater interest, notwithstanding the imminence of the luncheon interval, that delegates turned to Manchester's motion, moved by A. F. HUTT, asking Conference to condemn as unsatisfactory paragraph 18 of the Annual Report, and reiterating the instruction given by the 1947 Conference to the National Executive Council to "begin at once a strong campaign for rates of pay at least equal to those now paid by the major banks and insurance companies."

Paragraph 18, reporting on the 1947 instruction, recorded that the Council had obtained information about rates of pay in banks, insurance companies, and building societies, and had used it in negotiations in the National Joint Council and in the staff side's case before the National Arbitration Tribunal.

Many members, said Mr. Hutt, would regret the necessity for reiterating the instruction, which had been carried by a large majority last year—against strong opposition from the platform. But the position to-day was worse than it was a year ago, because they were now faced with the results of the arbitration award. He was appalled by the complacency with which that dreadful verdict had been received. There were three possible solutions: to have a modern

that local government service was becoming more complex, as new duties were constantly imposed, and it was necessary to get the best type of officer into the service by offering salaries at least comparable with those paid in similar professions.

Resuming the debate after lunch, MARGARET HAMILTON, Glasgow, urged delegates to join with Manchester in reminding the N.E.C. that

To this, Mr. Hutt, claiming his right of reply, retorted by quoting the scales of Lloyds Bank—not an anonymous bank like that referred to by Mr. Bevan. Lloyds' scale for men went from £145 at 17 to £500 at 32. What was wanted, he urged, was a campaign, not suggestions inside a committee. The campaign should come first, and if Mr. Bevan did not know what the word meant he should consult a dictionary (cheers). When the campaign had made the ground fruitful, then the seed could be sown.

"If you leave these people in charge," Mr. Hutt concluded, "you may have to chase the boiler-makers' target. If you do not pass this motion, you may as well scrap your service conditions and confine yourselves to camps and exhibitions."

Conference evidently agreed, approving the Manchester motion, against N.E.C. advice, by an overwhelming majority.

Exemption from Promotion Exam.

Returning to the Annual Report, F. E. PORTER, Goole and District, asked a question on paragraph 25, dealing with the request of the 1947 Conference for the amendment of paragraph 28 of the Charter to secure exemption from the promotion examination for officers "who were in the employ of a local authority on April 1, 1946, and who at that date had either 15 years' service or had reached the age of 35 years." According to LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, said Mr. Porter, the staff side had asked for exemption for those aged 35 or over, and with 15 years' service—a big difference. Why had the resolution been changed?

L. BEVAN, N.E.C., replied that his impression—he had not dealt with the matter personally—was that the staff side had asked for exemption for those with 15 years' service or who were over 35, but he must bow to the Journal, whose report was probably correct. He, nevertheless, regarded the decision reached by the National Joint Council as a great achievement.

Saturday Morning Leave

Next, S. C. MULLETT, Bethnal Green, moved reference back of paragraph 33 of the Annual Report, combined with an instruction to the N.E.C. to proceed forthwith in accordance with the references from the 1947 Conference. These references had called for Saturday morning leave either in alternate weeks or every third week, without any reduction in working hours, but the N.E.C. had decided, in view of national economic difficulties and public criticisms of the current 38

it must hitch its wagon to the star of insurance companies and banks if it was not to be "taken for a ride."

For the N.E.C., L. BEVAN, chairman of the service conditions committee and of the staff side of the National Joint Council, claimed with force that the Council had given effect to the instruction of last year's Conference. It had taken strong measures in the National Joint Council, and had emphasised the rates paid by banks and insurance companies in all its negotiations, both in the N.J.C. and before the National Arbitration Tribunal.

"Whitley Machinery Best"

For many years, at successive Conferences, he had heard the N.E.C. ordered to seek scales of salary comparable with the civil service. Last year, for the first time, they were asked to follow the banks and insurance companies, because it had been found that they were a little better than local government. Next year, it might be the boiler-makers.

But it was difficult to compare the salaries paid by banks and insurance companies with those paid by local authorities except in the General Division ranges. A comparison had been made, however, with one of the Big Five banks—which he could not name (laughter), because the information had been given in confidence. Its General Division maximum was £475—but many of the people on that scale were doing work and carrying responsibility which, in local government, would put them in the Clerical or Higher Clerical divisions.

The N.E.C. stood by the present system of collective bargaining; it believed in the Whitley machinery, in spite of the setback of the last twelve months. It believed that any machinery which had given the advantages provided by the Charter was worth preserving. It could not accept any campaign outside the National Joint Council. Officers who considered that their work was worth more than the General Division had the remedy in their own hands; they had the appeals machinery under the Charter, which had been extensively and successfully used. He urged Conference to reject the motion, and to agree that the only campaign which could be carried out was that in the National Joint Council.



"Whose was the hand of sterility?"

hour week, that action on them would be inadvertent.

Condemning this decision, Mr. Mullett said that his own Council was prepared to grant Saturday morning leave if it was provided for in the Charter, but only if it was in the Charter.

Seconding, H. HILDER, Bethnal Green, pointed out that the branch was not asking for anything new, since many authorities were already operating such schemes. It was not right for the Association to fall back in the face of public criticism; it should face it—that was one reason for having a public relations department.

Supporting, P. BAKER, Salford, asked whose was the hand of sterility which had descended on the N.E.C. Was it the absence of Mr. Riley from the staff side which led to such "stuff and nonsense" in the Annual Report? In this matter,



"Give the Association a modern target."

target and not tag along at the heels of the civil service, as the N.E.C. had done; to reiterate last year's decision that the Charter should be only a minimum; or to strengthen and stiffen as soon as possible the national staff side. He asked Conference to pass the motion, and thus give the Association a modern target.

"I warn you, and I warn the local authorities," Mr. Hutt declared, "that, if some stand of this kind is not taken soon, you will intensify the present position under which you are failing to recruit the type of entrant you badly need for the good of the service, and will fail to retain good men and women below the age of forty-five because of the rotten conditions."

"Since Allen and Riley dropped out of the staff side, we have not had a service conditions policy at all, but a niggling day-to-day messing about. We have had the fight in the wrong place; it should be in the National Joint Council, not between the platform and the floor of Conference. We are not disloyal, but there is immense dissatisfaction."

H. MATHER, Manchester, seconding, declared

Call for More Staff for Association's Trade Union Work

the N.E.C. was out of touch with the wishes of branches, many of which had produced their own schemes for Saturday morning leave—his own council had adopted a scheme readily and seemed surprised that the branch had not put it forward sooner—but it was better that the National Joint Council should approve a uniform arrangement.

D. WEATHERALL, **Seaham**, opposing, suggested that it was foolish and bad public relations to ask for Saturday mornings off when miners, dockers, and other heavy workers were being asked to do extra work.

L. O. GOODEN, **Hants County**, pointed out that the motion did not ask for shorter hours. His own authority had allowed Saturday morning leave for years—and the chairman of the county council, who strongly favoured it, was a member of the National Joint Council. It was defeatist for the N.E.C. to argue that the National Joint Council would reject the proposal: he believed it would welcome it.

For the N.E.C., L. H. TAYLOR agreed that the concession sought by the motion involved no reduction of hours and had been secured in many areas by local negotiation: but it was a different matter to secure it nationally through the National Joint Council. "Already, on many occasions," he declared, "this 38-hour week in local government has been raised in the country and in Parliament, and I warn Conference that the moment this is raised in the National Joint Council, the employers' side will ask for a *quid pro quo* on the basis of hours. If you insist on our asking for this readjustment of the working week, you may get your Saturday morning, but you may also get a longer week. We hope to build up such a body of evidence as will ultimately satisfy the National Joint Council that Saturday morning leave is desirable, but at present the employers are giving nothing away."

Conference took the hint and, though a count was necessary, rejected the motion by 639 to 373.

Time-Limit on Grading Appeals?

But **Bethnal Green** remained critical of the Annual Report and returned to the attack, this time calling for reference back of paragraph 45. This, reporting on a resolution of last year's Conference suggesting that all grading appeals not decided by a local authority within a fixed period should be referred to the provincial council, gave it as the view of the N.E.C. that, since the officer already possessed a personal right of appeal to the provincial council, no further action was necessary. Moving the motion, S. C. MULLETT described the N.E.C. policy as "entirely nebulous" while his seconder, H. HILDER, declared that it was simply "passing the buck" back to the branches. The only way to deal with delay in settling appeals was by a time-limit.

For the N.E.C., J. W. MOSS agreed that there were delays in reaching decisions on appeals, but urged that it would be a grave mistake to do anything which might add to the present difficulties. If a time-table had to be rigidly adhered to, many more appeals would be taken to the provincial council, whose machinery—already severely strained—would be overwhelmed. It was to the advantage of officers that as many appeals as possible should be disposed of at local level. Conference agreed, rejecting the motion.

"ASSOCIATION UNDERSTAFFED" At Headquarters and Districts

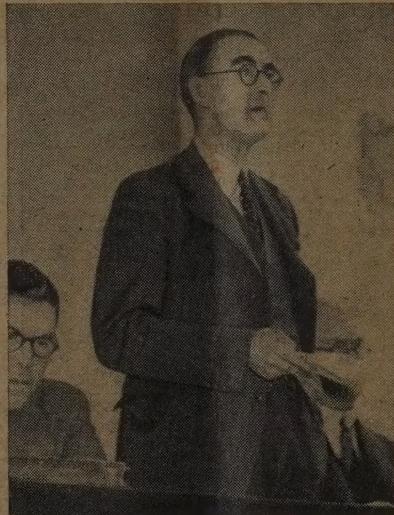
Next, L. G. LAMBE, **Croydon**, moved his branch's resolution, with which he incorporated an amendment by **Birmingham**, instructing the N.E.C. "to consider an increase in staff and all other means, including the redistribution of existing staff if necessary, so as to expedite the treatment of and publication of the Council's report upon the references from Conference, districts, branches, and members on matters relating to service conditions."

Most branches, Mr. Lambe suggested, had had to refer service conditions problems to Headquarters in the past year, and few had received quick and satisfactory answers. The May issue of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE had shown that, of the average subscription per member of 25s. 9d., only 4s. 1d. went on salaries. That was not a reasonable proportion. Every district office was badly understaffed—and when a single officer at Headquarters had the responsibility of preparing

the brief for the National Arbitration Tribunal and of deciding whether Mr. Jones was eligible for membership, there was something wrong.

All the N.E.C. had done to cope with the problems of the new nationalised industries and services was to appoint three new organising officers and a few assistants. But the potential membership in the health service alone was over 250,000; and one officer for a quarter of a million people was silly. The Association had to-day the opportunity to double its membership and become the most important factor amongst administrative and clerical workers, but it could do this only by reorganising and expanding its staff.

E. R. SHUTER, **Birmingham**, seconding, complained that the N.E.C. did not announce its



J. H. TYRRELL—"We cannot house 3,000."

decisions on the many matters referred to it until the publication of the Annual Report and the draft agenda, when it was too late for branches to put down a motion on a subject which they thought had been dealt with inadequately.

J. G. TODD, **Southport**, moved an amendment to confine the proposed increase to district staff. Delegates had no evidence of under-staffing at Headquarters, he argued, but there was ample evidence of under-staffing in the districts. Supporting, T. E. SMITH, **Birmingham**, speaking as education secretary of the West Midland district, declared that the whole education programme was in jeopardy unless assistance could be given from the district office staff.

Replying for the N.E.C., W. R. BEEVERS said that the Council sympathised with both motion and amendments, but resisted the implication that the staff had not been increased: three special officers had been appointed for the new nationalised services, and three more assistant district officers. Since then, however, three district officers had obtained appointments elsewhere, and this had created difficulties. Since the implications of the motion called for examination, he suggested that it and the amendments be referred to the N.E.C. Conference agreed to this course.

LIMITING SIZE OF CONFERENCE "Rule Would Permit 3,000 Delegates"

There followed the N.E.C. motion, moved by J. H. TYRRELL, seeking authority to determine the basis on which branches, district committees and sectional and professional organisations should be entitled to appoint delegates to the 1949 and 1950 Conferences and to suspend the present rule governing such representation, on the understanding that an alternative rule would be submitted for consideration and approval by the 1950 Conference.

Under the present rule, Mr. Tyrrell explained, there could be as many as 3,000 delegates to a NALGO Conference—and it was impossible to find accommodation for so great a number. This

year, branches had agreed to a voluntary restriction, and he thanked them for doing so: but it was desirable to make a permanent arrangement for the future. The problem, however, went beyond the machinery of representation: they must also consider provision for the various transferred and nationalised services. It would not be possible to prepare a scheme until the end of the present financial year, and the N.E.C. wanted to leave until then the arrangements for the 1949 and 1950 Conferences.

H. W. SEXTON, **Lancashire County**, moved an amendment seeking to require the Council to submit its proposals for the approval of Conference. Representation, he argued, was a matter for branches to consider, and the N.E.C. should be able to put forward a considered scheme next year. But Mr. Tyrrell resisted the amendment, pointing out that, if it were accepted, the existing rule would apply next year.

"Important to Branches"

The amendment was rejected, whereupon J. C. BUNTON, **Southend-on-Sea**, proposed continuation in 1949 of the voluntary limitation accepted this year, on the understanding that the N.E.C. would bring forward its scheme for the future, or an interim report, next year. Representation was important to branches, Mr. Bunton argued, and the N.E.C. should not have a free hand to fix the number of votes for the next two years. Conference, however, rejected this amendment also, Mr. Tyrrell promising that the N.E.C. would submit a full interim report as soon as possible, but emphasising that, in view of the rapidly changing position, it could not undertake to present a final report until 1950.

Also rejected was an amendment moved by Miss CURTIS, **South Somerset and District Electricity Company**, seeking to restrict representation at Conference after 1950 to one delegate from each branch, with card voting according to branch strength and no separate representation for district committees. The amendment also proposed the immediate setting up of committees in each district to recommend the amalgamation and/or splitting of existing branches.

No more successful was a **West Riding** amendment, moved by J. T. SAVILLE, seeking to reaffirm the principle of branch representation in proportion to membership.

Call for Bigger Gatherings

Then, having so far supported the N.E.C.'s views, Conference gave a demonstration of that inconsequentiality which is one of its charms, by adopting a **Hants County** amendment, moved by L. O. GOODEN, limiting the motion to an instruction to the N.E.C. to submit an alternative scheme of representation in 1950. The effect of this would be that, next year and in 1950, representation would be based on the old rule giving a possibility of more than 3,000 delegates, and Mr. Gooden made it clear that he appreciated this. "If it came to a tussle between the size of the hall and adequate branch representation," he said, "representation must come first—even if that means changing the place of the Conference. The big political parties do not limit representation at their conferences to 2,000, and even the Housewives' League can rally 8,000."

The bigger the Conference, he argued, the more representative views were taken back to members, who wanted to know what was going on. Conference was their one chance of seeing their elected representatives under fire on the platform. At Bournemouth there were more meetings outside the Conference hall than ever before, and if a branch had only one representative this year, he would have to be an expert on public relations, health services, electricity, gas, education, and even magazine editing. The amendment would give the N.E.C. twelve months in which to find a hall big enough to enable it to comply with the rules.

Notwithstanding Mr. Tyrrell's warning that adoption of the amendment might make it impossible to hold the next two Conferences in the towns to which they had been invited, Conference adopted the amendment, and **Bognor Regis** having withdrawn its scheme to restrict the number of delegates to 1,000, approved the motion as amended.

In view of this decision, it was hardly surprising

No Separate Representation or Sections for Utility Staffs

that Conference should reject the subsequent motion, moved by H. LINDSAY, Hazel Grove and Bramhall, seeking an amendment of rule to allow the branch with only one delegate wishing to propose a motion to submit a written statement from another member of the branch as seconder of the motion. In support, Mr. Lindsay pointed to the difficulty encountered by the single delegate in finding a branch with similar views to second its motion, but P. SHEPPARD, Kingsclere



"Electricity members . . . listening to discussions that do not concern them"

and Whitchurch, speaking as representative of what was probably the smallest branch in the Association—with 22 members—formed only this year, repudiated the suggestion, contending that any branch with a motion worthy of consideration would have no difficulty in getting it seconded, and Conference agreed with him.

"FREEZING" THE N.E.C. But Electoral System to Stand

But if Conference was unwilling to restrict its own size, it was prepared to restrict the size of the N.E.C. This was shown when J. H. TYRELL moved another N.E.C. motion designed to "freeze" the size of the Council at its present figure of 72, pending submission in 1950 of a substitute for the rule by which the size of the Council is determined.

As a result of the rise in membership, Mr. Tyrrell explained, the size of the N.E.C. had greatly increased, and they felt that it should be kept within reasonable limits. But the whole question of representation must be surveyed before any definite recommendation could be made, and therefore it was proposed to defer the recommendation until 1950.

G. H. ROE, West Midland district committee, moved an amendment to return, between now and 1950, to the system of election of the N.E.C. employed between 1943 and 1945 (when candidates, nominated by branches, were elected by card vote of branch representative to the district committee). The branch vote, Mr. Roe argued, allowed careful consideration to be given to the ability and the record of each candidate, which should first be proved at district level; it gave a chance to able members of smaller branches; and it was much better than the present haphazard system.

T. E. BRIERLEY, West Midland district, seconding urged that the method advocated would give the smaller branches a stronger voice in the selection of N.E.C. members. But H. CHARLTON, Bolton & District, opposed, declaring that NALGO's strength was determined by the interest taken in it by the rank and file. Under the present system, members had an opportunity at least once a year of voting for candidates of their own free choice, and the number who exercised that right showed that it was appreciated.

J. H. TYRELL, N.E.C., opposed on the ground that Conference itself decided the method of election only a year or two ago, and the amendment was rejected. Also rejected was a Lancashire County amendment, moved by H. W. SEXTON, calling for submission of the new scheme for the election to next year's Conference, and delegates then adopted the motion.

They went on to adopt, without debate, an N.E.C. motion approving in principle the policy of establishing consultative councils and com-

mittees for members in the nationalised services, and authorising the N.E.C. to take such action as it considered necessary to implement such policy and to regulate matters arising in consequence thereof (including power to adapt the existing rules), pending appropriate amendments of the rules and constitution of the Association. Moving this, L. BEVAN said that the Council had in mind arrangements which would not prejudice any suggestions made for the Association's future structure. But the N.E.C. wanted expert advice at district and Headquarters level on service conditions matters, so as to be able to take the fullest possible advantage of the national machinery now being set up for the nationalised services.

DISTRICT-NATIONAL LINK Electricity Plea Rejected

Then G. A. WHITE proposed a Northmet branch motion which, while welcoming the "steps being taken to adapt NALGO organisation and machinery to suit the needs of the utility and hospital members," urged "the immediate constitution of the consultative bodies in a manner such that each district consultative committee can report direct to its own national consultative council, which national consultative councils would deal with detail and application of policy, leaving the service conditions committee to act as a co-ordinating body on major service conditions policy in all spheres."

His members, said Mr. White, wanted to express appreciation of the efforts of the N.E.C., the staff, and the district committees on their behalf—efforts which had gone a long way to meet their immediate needs. The motion was intended to protect the interests of the electricity member and to put the point of view of members in the other nationalised services. If the N.E.C. would give an assurance that, at the appropriate time, the national consultative councils could have reports direct from the district consultative committees, the branch was prepared to agree to the motion being referred to the N.E.C. for consideration.

But T. NOLAN, for the N.E.C., would not give such an assurance. He opposed the motion, recalling the President's warning against any action likely to sectionalise, graduate, or classify membership, since that was the path to disintegration. The consultative committees were in an early experimental stage, and the N.E.C. was not prepared to go beyond its present proposals, under which consultative committees in the districts were under the control of the district committee and the national consultative committees were controlled by the service conditions committee of the N.E.C.

Claiming his right of reply, Mr. White contended that Mr. Nolan had misunderstood the position. Electricity members, he said, agreed that the national consultative committees should be subservient to the service conditions committee, and they regarded the unity of NALGO as paramount. In the electricity industry—thanks to the co-operation of the B.E.A., and the help of the NALGO staff—they had set up the finest Whitely machinery in the country: all they now sought was to make that machinery work.

But on this matter, Conference preferred to follow the N.E.C. and rejected the motion.

PERILS OF SEPARATION

"Might Disrupt Association"

Having done that, it was in no mood to reject Wallingford's motion, briefly introduced by J. C. BROWNE, inviting it to resolve "that all matters relating to public utilities be dealt with by the National Executive Council under one head and that no completely separate sections be formed to weaken or disrupt the NALGO framework as at present constituted." Before the vote, however, T. FERNLEY, Manchester, did his best to dissuade Conference from being too dogmatic about the shape of things to come. After forty years of slow change to meet slowly-changing conditions, the tempo had accelerated tremendously, and it was not possible now to make plans which would be certain to endure even for twelve months. It was said that separate representation would mean the disruption of NALGO, but he believed that stone-wall resistance to

change might do more harm than any over-enthusiastic appeal for new methods (cheers). If they suppressed the attempts of certain sections to have representation, they might cause the disintegration of the Association.

B. W. HEPTINSTALL, Bournemouth and District Electricity Supply Officers, declared himself heartened by Mr. Fernley's attitude. "All this talk of separation is nonsense," Mr. Heptinstall declared. "We came into NALGO because we wanted to; we had dozens of opportunities to join other organisations, but we chose NALGO. Is it likely that we, who have taken the trouble to put up for the N.E.C., will want to break away? I hope you will keep an open mind."

L. H. TAYLOR, supporting the motion for the N.E.C., promised that it would keep an open mind. But it knew that the strength of NALGO had come from unity, and it believed that, if it were broken down into separate sections, its strength would diminish. Conference agreed and adopted the motion.

ELECTRICITY COMMITTEES Separate Representation Sought

B. W. HEPTINSTALL then returned to the microphone to propose a long motion by his branch seeking to provide a detailed scheme for modification of the Association's machinery, in the interests of electricity staffs. Before doing so, however, he accepted a PORTSMOUTH amendment which greatly simplified the motion to read: "That this Conference is of the opinion that the constitution of NALGO should be modified to provide for an electricity committee for each of the fourteen areas of the British Electricity



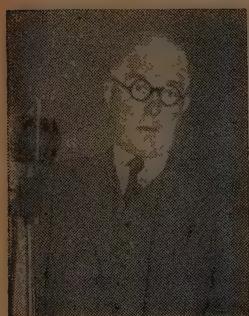
B. W. HEPTINSTALL.—"If we are the tail, give us a reason to wag"

Authority, and that electricity, clerical and administrative staffs shall be separately represented on the National Executive Council."

The principle behind the motion, Mr. Heptinstall explained, was that members affected by action taken in their name should be responsible for making the decisions upon which that action was based. It was vital to electricity staffs, now remote from local government, that they should be able to discuss their special problems with all other electricity branches in the same district. But they had to spend much time on district committees listening to discussions on which they could express no opinion. Their desire to obtain representation on the N.E.C. for their 19,000 non-local government members was elementary justice, if the N.E.C. was to be genuinely representative of all interests.

"The danger of losing our support," Mr. Heptinstall warned Conference, "lies in treating us as a minority. It is said that we are the tail trying to wag the dog. If we are the tail, we want the main body to give us a reason to wag rather than to run round and round in circles after us" (laughter).

N.E.C. Against Affiliation—"Political Implications"



E.A.S. YOUNG—"Would unquestionably imply connection with one Party."



L. O. GOODEN—"No Open Sesame to better wages and conditions."



Miss F. E. POLE—"Time we stopped riding on the back of other people's work."



R. D. WHITLAM—"Last year we had a Red Herring—this year the Red Bogey."



J. B. PARRY—"We can counter unity of employers only by linking with T.U.C."

P. H. SEEL, Met-Electric, seconding, emphasised that electricity members did not ask for anything that would separate them from NALGO, but they felt, particularly after the setting-up of the new Whitley machinery, that they should deal with their special problems themselves.

After Miss CURTIS, South Somerset and District Electricity Company, had formally moved an amendment to provide that each electricity area committee should, in the first instance, be composed of one member from each branch within the area having electricity membership, and thereafter by due constitutional means agreed at Conference, A. E. FITTON, North Western and North Wales District Committee, opposed the motion. They must, he urged, preserve the unity of NALGO. Acceptance of the motion would open the door to similar requests by the transport, health, and other services. The Association had appointed specialist organising officers and had set up in most districts advisory committees for them.

That electricity members were not unanimous behind the motion was shown by G. E. NORRISS who, although representing the North East London Electricity branch, came to the microphone to oppose it. His branch, he said, liked the idea of the consultative committee, and thought it should be tried out before being thrown overboard. There was going to be a national consultative committee, and the only thing holding it up was the apparent slowness of some districts in forming local consultative committees. His members considered, too, that they had already had such good service from the N.E.C. that it would be churlish to complain about representation on it. The last election had given them representation—and one representative elected in recognition of good service to NALGO as a whole was worth half a dozen present by toleration.

"Would Lead to Splits"

J. D. S. MOUNTFORT, South-East Area Board, and formerly with the London and Home Counties Joint Electricity Authority, one of the oldest utility branches in NALGO, also opposed. In the past sixteen years, he told Conference, his branch had had many troubles unconnected with local government matters, yet in every case the N.E.C. had taken them up and obtained satisfaction. True, NALGO occasionally needed "gingering" but to start a separate organisation for electricity within the Association would only lead to splits and "general muck-up."

It was now nearing five p.m., and delegates had begun to demonstrate their impatience by gentle "stamping out" of some of the longer speeches—a fact which gave A. S. BUTCHER, Northmet, the opportunity for a neat rebuke. Pointing out that electricity members had to listen, at district committee meetings, to long discussions of local government affairs which did not affect them, he added: "That is one reason why, rather than waste your time, we think that we should deal with electricity matters at district level by a committee of electricity staff members." The Transport and General Workers' Union had separate sections, yet remained united,

and NALGO, too, could retain its unity while giving the sections within it a fair hearing and a chance to deal with the problems they knew best. (cheers).

After D. C. McHUGO, Central Electricity Board, had also supported the motion, L. O. GOODEN, Hants County, suggested a compromise. The local government delegates, he declared, were sympathetic towards the electricity officers' claims, but they did not like the idea of separate representation on the N.E.C. Mr. Heptinstall had himself stood for election in a "free-for-all" ballot and succeeded: if he would delete the reference to separate representation on the N.E.C., he would find substantial support among local government officers for district organisation, in which there was little danger. (cheers).

"Time Not Yet Opportune"

For the N.E.C., J. W. MOSS said it did not believe that the time was opportune for sectional representation. Already, there were half-a-dozen representatives of the electricity service on the council, and Mr. Heptinstall had himself secured election, after only twelve or eighteen months' membership of NALGO—by the free and open vote of all the members. That was the answer to the motion. It was necessary to keep an open mind, and come back if necessary with alternative suggestions, but for the present he urged Conference to reject the motion.

Claiming his right of reply, Mr. Heptinstall agreed that electricity members now had good representation on the N.E.C., and he would not press that point. But he did press that they should have the right to meet at district level, with co-ordination with the district committee.

Conference, however, remained unconvinced and rejected both the amendment and the motion.

It was now five p.m., but before announcing the adjournment, the President announced with regret the death of S. WHITEHEAD, honorary treasurer of the Association from 1943 to 1945, and a former borough treasurer of Hammersmith. Delegates stood in silence as a tribute of respect.

CASE AGAINST AFFILIATION "Would Imply Political Connection"

Wednesday dawned cloudy and cool, and it was in this more refreshing atmosphere that delegates settled down for what might be the last—for some years to come, at least—of the long series of debates on whether NALGO should affiliate to the Trades Union Congress.

The possibilities were covered in ten items on the agenda: the N.E.C. motion rejecting affiliation; a composite amendment calling for affiliation forthwith; and a series of amendments proposing a referendum of members and specifying the majority which should be regarded as decisive. Before calling on the N.E.C. spokesman, the President explained that he proposed to allow all to be discussed. Whatever their decision on the N.E.C. motion or on the following amendments calling for immediate affiliation, delegates would be asked to decide whether they wanted a referendum of members, and what majority they wished to prescribe to make its decision effective.

With this preliminary, E. A. S. YOUNG, remarking that it was the fifth or sixth time he had done it, rose to move the N.E.C. motion: "That this Conference is not in favour of affiliation to the Trades Union Congress." He spoke clearly and with a fervent vigour which secured for him the rapt and appreciative attention of a packed hall. A year ago, he told Conference, he had supported the motion calling for an exploration of the possibility of affiliating to the T.U.C. on a basis "mutually acknowledged to be solely industrial and without implying allegiance to or connection with any political party." He did not regret that decision, for he had been prepared to go to any length to prove or disprove the possibility of non-political affiliation. But the exploration had shown, he contended, that affiliation would unquestionably imply a connection with one political party. (cheers). Although there might be no organic link between the T.U.C. and the party in question, there was undoubtedly a very real spiritual link. Members of NALGO were public servants, and as such, must not only give undivided allegiance and impartial service, but must clearly be seen to do so. It must be evident at all times that NALGO was free from political associations, whether red, white, or blue.

"Could Not Forsake Impartiality"

They had been told that affiliation would gain them the support of other unions and easier access to Government departments. If that were true, it would amount to an indictment of the political party in power. They were also told that affiliation might secure representation on other bodies; but, if that were the only route to representation, the N.E.C. preferred to do without it. He could not forsake his ideal of impartial public service for either "expediency" or "strategy."

What would affiliation mean at the local level? If they affiliated, they must do so wholeheartedly, and, like other affiliated unions, play their part in local trades councils, or trades and labour councils. These bodies discussed matters of local government policy. Was it right that a branch president, who might be the borough treasurer or the town clerk, or even a General Division clerk, should be discussing policy which his colleagues then had to administer impartially? The N.E.C. took the view that that would be wrong and unfair to branch officers. (cheers).

In standing aloof, they had nothing to fear; indeed, they would gain the esteem of the people they served. All the political parties appreciated their difficulty and respected their point of view—a point of view they should take greater steps to explain to the country at large. (cheers). He believed that the nation would resist any movement that tried to strait-jacket an organisation into a particular school of thought. Let them make it clear, once for all, that NALGO could give greater service by independence—not for selfish ends, but for the public good.

The storm of cheers which marked Mr. Young's last words hushed quickly as E. L. RILEY reached for the microphone, but turned to laughter as, in three words, he formally seconded the motion and passed the ball to the opposition.

J. B. PARRY, South Wales, at once took it up to move the amendment in the name of his district committee, Fulham, Glasgow, Hayes and Harling-

Branches' Case For—"No Allegiance to Any Party"



A.E. NORTROP—"N.E.C. minority felt affiliation was absolutely essential."

T. FERNLEY—"Report showed that advantages far outweighed disadvantages."

H. JONES—"There is no doubt that the T.U.C. is a political organisation."

W. D. GROVER—"Make up your own mind and don't be bossed around any longer."

R. G. RIDDELL—"Are you prepared to lose members for nebulous advantages?"

ton, Islington, Leicester, Manchester, Newport (I.O.W.), Nottingham, Southport, Tottenham, and West Ham, instructing the N.E.C. to apply for affiliation forthwith. The masterly, exhaustive, and impartial report by the general secretary in the January number of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE had made it abundantly clear, Mr. Parry claimed, that affiliation would not imply allegiance to any political party, and the Congress representatives whom the N.E.C. had met had confirmed that that was so. Mr. Young had raised the Labour Party bogey, but had failed to point out that affiliation to the Labour Party was a different matter, which could be effected only after complying with the conditions of the Trades Union Act, 1913.

He could not understand the attitude of the N.E.C. after the President and the general secretary had both said that NALGO could affiliate without political implications, but he supposed that "there are none so blind as those who will not see" (cheers). Those favouring affiliation had been accused of political motives, but such an accusation could apply only to a minority (cries of "Oh!"). Anyway, it was a case of the pot calling the kettle black, for he was confident that some of the diehards supporting the N.E.C.'s motion had political objections, with, perhaps, a little snobbishness thrown in (cheers).

"NALGO Already Suspect"

N.E.C. members had said that NALGO would be suspect if it affiliated, but, in some respects, it was already suspect because it was still outside the T.U.C. Surely NALGO's policy was to be decided, not according to the likes or dislikes of the employers, but by what was best for members. It was a gross insult to suggest that, if they affiliated, members would fail to render loyal, frank, and faithful service, irrespective of their political complexion.

The real issue was whether it was to their advantage to link up with the T.U.C. On this point Mr Warren had reported that NALGO had never been consulted by the Government on major issues, such as wages policy, nor by Government departments or the local authority associations on questions of local government policy. If NALGO's views were to be heard, it could only be through the T.U.C.—otherwise members must remain out in the cold and take what was coming to them. The local authority associations were getting closer together, not for NALGO's benefit, but because they appreciated the advantages of working collectively, as was

apparent in their resistance to the Association's justifiable demands. Such unity by the employers could be effectively countered only by linking with the T.U.C.

Concluding, Mr. Parry forecast that NALGO's organisation of public utility staffs would sooner or later bring it into collision with some other union. This situation had already arisen in some districts, and the only medium for settling it was the T.U.C. Moreover, they should not think only of the material benefits of affiliation: NALGO could make a valuable contribution to the T.U.C., on service conditions matters, and on local government policy.

"Strike Not An Issue"

L. O. GOODEN, Hants C.C., supporting the N.E.C. motion and looking at the question as a "plain man," said that the recent rejection of the engineers' wage claim had demonstrated that affiliation was not an Open Sesame to better wage and service conditions. Some of the branches seeking affiliation were like the boy who lacked the nerve to march through the town unless he could fall in and follow the band (cheers). It had been suggested that affiliation would have meant a better deal over the bonus claim. If they believed that, they believed that an impartial system of justice for industrial claims could be subjected to insidious political blackmail (cheers).

Some members thought that, after affiliation, they would be able to enforce their demands by threat of strike. But for NALGO the strike was not an issue; they were servants of the public and could not desert the interests they served. In any case, they lacked the two essential prerequisites to strike action—one hundred per cent. loyal following, and a fighting fund to make up salaries while the fight was on. True they had £10,000, but this would work out at about 1s. 2d. a member, insufficient to keep a General Division clerk going while a reply was received from Headquarters (cheers).

He refused to accept the suggestion that local government officers were white-livered and had to go cap-in-hand to a large organisation for support. They had the numerical strength of seventeen army divisions, and if they could not make a success of their job they deserved to fail.

"Would Bring New Life to T.U.C."

Next to the microphone came Miss F. E. POLE, Leicester City, who, supporting the amendment forcefully and with admirable brevity, attributed NALGO's success in collective bargaining to the strength of the whole trade union movement. It was time the Association stopped riding on the back of other people's work. It would not lose one jot of its independence by affiliation, but would bring new life and a new outlook to the T.U.C.

Opposing the amendment, P. W. ENGLISH, Ilford, pointed out that the National Union of Teachers had rejected affiliation because it did not wish it to be said that there was any political flavour in teaching. The same thing applied to public service officers (cheers). He had been asked at a recent debate what NALGO had got that N.U.P.E.—an affiliated union—had not. His reply had been, "170,000 members, of whom 20,000 have been recruited from the public

utilities during the past year." Organisations with political affiliations were so busy furthering political aims that they had no time for domestic issues.

W. D. GROVER, West Ham, cast support for the amendment into the form of a parable. Once upon a time, he said, there was a young man called Ernest who was thinking of getting married, but, being very cautious, called in a firm of inquiry agents to investigate the family connections and history of an eligible lady, Miss T.U.Cey. The agents reported that she was beyond reproach, that her connections were impeccable, and that no harm would come of the match. Despite this assurance, Ernest's guardian, N. E. Codger, whom he knew as "Uncle Nec," had recommended him, without giving any reason, to have nothing to do with her. Meeting him at Bournemouth, Uncle Nec had come out with a lot of arguments and fears in the hope of scaring Ernest. But Ernest, who was not doing too well as a bachelor—his clothes needed repair and he wanted a good meal—proposed to tell Uncle Nec that he intended to make up his own mind and would not be bossed around any longer (cheers).

Opposing the amendment in a particularly well-delivered speech, R. G. RIDDELL, Wandsworth, spoke as a branch secretary who was trying to build up membership. Few of his members, he said, doubted the political significance of affiliation, and resignation had been mentioned, not as a threat, but as a statement of inevitable fact. Were branch secretaries, he asked, prepared to lose members for the nebulous advantages of affiliation?

"Frightened by Red Bogey"

R. D. WHITLAM, Bermondsey, supporting the amendment, complained that, last year, Conference had been diverted by a red herring: this year it was being frightened by a red bogey. Such an attitude did not command respect of public or employers. NALGO's isolation was reflected in the negotiations of the past year. Black-coated workers were being attacked and treated with contempt: they must go into the T.U.C. to establish their rights as a profession.

T. FERNLEY, Manchester, also supporting, bitterly confessed his failure to understand how any body of responsible people could turn down the general secretary's report, which had dismissed as imaginary the fears of the opponents of affiliation and had shown that the advantages far outweighed the disadvantages. He was bound to believe that they had made up their minds long ago and that nothing would change them: that no new facts painstakingly assembled in logical and objective reports, no assurances, however competently put forward, could reach them behind their Chinese wall.

Mr. Fernley was continuing to elaborate his point, but Conference, after 70 minutes of debate, showed its impatience, and he gave way to Mrs. C. WALTERS, Erith, who could not see why anyone who opposed affiliation had come to Conference at all—for if they thought affiliation a confession of weakness, they must consider membership of NALGO in the same light. On the other hand, if union was strength, then greater union was greater strength. Replying to Mr. Gooden's metaphor about the boy who marched with the band, Mrs. Walters observed that those



"Uncle Nec had tried to scare Ernest"

Affiliation Decision Left to Referendum of Members



"Those who followed the band arrived with greater speed and pleasure"

who followed the band arrived with greater speed and pleasure than those who did not.

H. JONES, Cheshire C.C., opposing the amendment, quoted the opinion of Mr. John Simonds, the late general secretary, and of Sir Frederick Mander, former general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, in support of his argument that the T.U.C. was a political organisation.

A. S. BUTCHER, Northmet, denied that affiliation would change them overnight into a bunch of pseudo-socialists with no other interest than to strike for higher wages.

E. F. HEDLEY, South Shields, urged Conference to be guided by the N.E.C.—to be followed immediately by a member of the N.E.C., A. E. NORTROP, who, speaking from the floor, reminded delegates that it had not been unanimous in its opposition to affiliation. He was one of 16 who had opposed the motion—some of them senior members of the Council. He suggested to the majority group that they had given members no information at all to explain their attitude. The minority group in the N.E.C. felt that affiliation was not only desirable, but absolutely necessary (cheers).

F. G. C. ELWICK, Education Welfare Officers National Association, supporting the amendment, reported that at his Association's conference at Easter there had been almost unanimous support for NALGO's affiliation to the T.U.C.

"Machine Geared to a Purpose"

It was now 11.0 a.m. and delegates had clearly heard enough. Conference carried a motion from the floor that the question be put, but before the vote was taken, E. L. RILEY claimed the right to a brief reply for the N.E.C. There was nothing new in its attitude, he said. It had always opposed affiliation and, having explored the possibilities of non-political affiliation, was continuing to oppose it. He had been a member of the deputation to the T.U.C. and, although he could not repeat the conversations, he assured Conference that those who had been there had soberly weighed up the situation and come to an honest conclusion.

The T.U.C. took pride in the fact that it was the parent of the Parliamentary Labour party. The people who controlled the T.U.C. represented big unions affiliated to the Labour party, and those unions had twelve seats on the executive of the Labour party.

"Believe me," he concluded, "when I tell you that the machine is geared to a particular purpose. I do not blame them. That is their business. But let us be honest. Do we want to be in that business?" (cries of "No!") They were all entitled to draw their own conclusions from Mr. Warren's report. He had heard one man describe it as "a good case for affiliation," and another as "the finest report against affiliation I have ever read." He called upon Conference to reject the amendment, which asked the N.E.C. to apply forthwith for affiliation.

This Conference did, first on a show of hands and then on a card vote, by a majority of 46,641—55,254 in favour and 101,895 against.

Passing to the second stage of the debate, C. A. SMALLMAN, Birmingham, moved the amendment in the name of his branch, the South Western and West Midland districts, Derby, Sunderland, and West Cornwall, instructing the N.E.C. to take a ballot of the members on the question and, in the event of a majority of votes being cast in favour, to apply immediately for affiliation. Speaking with an earnest gravity which

won the ear of Conference, Mr. Smallman argued that, as a matter of principle, every member should be allowed to record his opinion on this important issue. Such a vote, moreover, would fortify the Association and would lift a load off the minds of delegates.

Seconding, F. R. MOUNTFORD, West Cornwall, told delegates that his branch had taken a ballot on affiliation. Eighty-one per cent. of members voted, 295 against affiliation and 290 in favour. As a result, his executive had instructed its Conference delegates to vote against affiliation. This

BALLOT ARRANGEMENTS

Arrangements for the ballot on affiliation to the T.U.C. are set out on page 162.

meant that the 290 members who had voted in favour were not represented on this issue.

J. HUNT, Derby, asked what was the purpose of the general secretary's report except to assist all members—not just those present—to come to a conclusion. So important an issue should be settled by a democratic ballot of members. Further support came from W. B. KAVANAGH, Pembroke, after which the delegates called for a vote. The amendment was adopted by what appeared to be a majority of about six to one.

This brought the debate to its third stage—the determination of the size of the majority necessary to make the ballot effective. C. F. HAYWARD, Hastings, formally moved his branch's amendment requiring a majority of all members of the Association as an essential condition to affiliation. This was supported by E. L. RILEY for the N.E.C. and, although, when put to the meeting, appeared to be lost on a show of hands, it was carried on a card vote by 80,719 votes to 66,893.

Shoreditch having withdrawn its amendment giving the Council three months in which to hold the ballot, and Chesterfield an amendment insisting on a two-thirds majority of votes to secure affiliation, F. W. DAWKES, Sutton and Cheam, moved an amendment requiring an effective majority to be both a clear majority of all members of the Association and a two-thirds majority of those voting. In support, he pointed out that all members had been recruited under conditions of non-affiliation, so that, if there were to be a change of policy, it should be ratified by a large and clear majority. Conference, however, was

unimpressed and rejected the amendment, whereupon, all other amendments having been withdrawn or abandoned, the President formally put the two amendments carried as a substantive motion, namely, "that the N.E.C. be and is hereby instructed forthwith to take a ballot of members on the question whether the Association should affiliate to the T.U.C., and in the event of a majority of members being in favour of affiliation to apply immediately to the T.U.C. for the Association's affiliation thereto." This was carried by an overwhelming majority.

But delegates were not yet to be allowed to forget the T.U.C., for Mr. Riley rose to ask them to confirm the N.E.C.'s action in (1) giving to the General Council of the T.U.C. an undertaking (referred to in para. 59 of the Annual Report) to observe the provisions of the "Bridlington Scheme" for regulating the relations of trade unions in recruitment and the settlement of differences, and (2) entering into arrangements for consultation with the General Council in the event of differences which could not be composed at union level.

When NALGO entered the public utility and hospital field, he recalled, it was important that friction with other organisations should be avoided, for the new bargaining machinery required the co-operation of all, and the public interest demanded that the inauguration of new services should not be complicated by inter-union disputes. The fact that NALGO was not affiliated to the T.U.C. made the position delicate, and it was gratifying to report that the T.U.C. had appreciated NALGO's position and recognised its desire to guide its policy in accordance with trade-union principles. As a result, there had developed a happy spirit of friendliness and co-operation between NALGO and the other established unions interested in the new nationalised services, and the arrangements made had been of incalculable benefit to members.

Opposing the motion, H. W. PENDRILL, Woolwich, considered that to put upon district officers the responsibility of deciding who was to be a member of a particular union was unfair. His members would not give up the right to choose to what organisation they would belong. If they were disgruntled with one, they should be free to go to another, and it should be no part of the duty of a district officer to stop them. Conference, however, approved the N.E.C. motion. Whereupon Mr. Pendrill, undaunted, moved his branch's motion asking Conference to refuse to ratify any agreement which would deprive a member of his free choice of union. From the platform Mr. Riley said that he knew of no agreement which deprived anyone of a free choice of union, and delegates supported him, rejecting the Woolwich motion.

NALGO and E.P.E.A.

Next, P. M. STEWART, Central London Electricity, moved his branch's motion seeking cancellation of the agreement between NALGO and the Electrical Power Engineers' Association under which certain officers in the electricity supply industry cannot be admitted to NALGO unless they are first members of the E.P.E.A., and recommending in its place a provision in national and branch rules that NALGO should



READY FOR THE FRAY—F. Newton (Nottingham), J. B. Parry (S. Wales), W. D. Grover (West Ham), and N. McLean (Glasgow) line up for the microphone during the affiliation debate.

Staff Side Leader

Routs Critics of Consolidation Award

not deal with the salaries and conditions of technical staffs covered by the National Joint Board of the electricity supply industry save by agreement with the organisations concerned. Mr. Stewart offered to withdraw the motion if the N.E.C. would undertake to consider the matter and take any necessary action; but this offer T. NOLAN, N.E.C., refused to accept. The E.P.E.A., he pointed out had exclusive rights to negotiate for technical staffs; it was participating in negotiations on the formation of fourth joint council for electricity managerial grades; and it was co-operating on provisions for the safety, health, and welfare of workers in that industry.

For the motion, Mr. Stewart argued that the agreement with the E.P.E.A. was one-sided and illogical, since applicants for membership of the E.P.E.A. were accepted if considered suitable, but applicants for membership of NALGO were referred to the E.P.E.A. for sanction if there was any doubt about their suitability. That was unjust. In his own area, the E.P.E.A. had turned down applicants referred to it by NALGO.

G. A. WHITE, Northmet, suggested that the cause of the trouble was that the E.P.E.A. looked for academic and not functional qualifications. Mr. White withdrew his branch's amendment—which substituted for the first part of the motion a simple request to the N.E.C. to cancel the agreement with the E.P.E.A.—while asking the N.E.C. for an assurance that it would try, through the Electricity Employees' National Committee, to get the matter cleared up as soon as possible.

E.P.E.A.'s Prior Claims

The South Somerset & District Electricity Co. branch also withdrew its amendment, commanding the agreement with the E.P.E.A., but G. E. NORRISS, N.E. London Electricity, returned to the attack. Emphasising the difficulty of drawing the line between technical, administrative, and clerical staffs, he said that a showroom salesman might be classed as technical whereas the man who bought the equipment he sold—a much more technical job—was not. Consultative machinery should be set up to end the practice of members wanting to jump from side to side according to which organisation offered the most advantages.

For the N.E.C., T. NOLAN said that these problems would sort themselves out in time. There would soon be four joint councils, covering everyone in the industry. The major service conditions work for engineers had, from the outset, been done by the E.P.E.A. For that reason the interest of NALGO in those officers had been a "residual" one, and it would be out of harmony with trade-union principles for NALGO not to recognise the prior claims of the E.P.E.A. The two bodies must obviously adjust their working arrangements in the most practical and effective way, and the agreement did that by recognising the E.P.E.A.'s primary interest arising out of the position it established years ago. It amounted to an acceptance of the fact that NALGO could not become a rival of the E.P.E.A. in negotiating for electricity engineers. He asked Conference to reject the motion.

But Conference refused to follow the Council's advice, rebelliously preferring to adopt the motion by a big majority.

ALARM AT SALARY POSITION

Call for Fresh Approach

From this electrical interlude, Conference turned to what many had thought might provide the liveliest debate of the three days—the long series of motions and amendments condemning, some in the most outspoken terms, the consolidation award. They were disappointed. Under a douche of cold water from the platform, all the rockets, cannons and roman candles prepared for the N.E.C. either fizzled out or failed to ignite at all.

J. S. FORMAN, Solihull, put a hesitant match to the first cracker, recording "grave concern" at the award, "alarm" at the prospect of local government salaries being frozen at so adverse a rate by comparison with those of other public servants, and declaring that the award represented a "distinct lowering of standards" and was bound to damage the prestige of the service and its recruitment. The motion, said Mr. Forman, was not intended as a censuring of the N.E.C., a commentary on its handling of the recent claim,

or a quibble at the wage levels, as such. But an opportunity to press for improved scales, or bonus, or both, had been lost, and they must consider what could be done in the future. Charter scales, always an improvisation, had now become a hotch-potch of unrelated rates.

They should make a new and courageous approach to the whole problem. There were many officers, especially the "middle men," on whom so much responsibility rested, who had had no advance at all, apart from the bonus.

After Mr. Forman, the

deluge—delivered by L. BEVAN, chairman of the staff side of the National Joint Council and the service conditions committee of the N.E.C. in a quickfire, wide-ranging jet of cold fact sufficient to quench the hottest fires of criticism and revolt.

The Council, he said, fully accepted and shared the motion's dissatisfaction with the Tribunal's award. But it did not accept the statements that local government salaries were "so adverse" in comparison with those in government and other public employment, or that the award represented "a distinct lowering of the standards of remuneration." Those statements, he asserted, were inaccurate and misleading. The civil service, for example, gave a man £405 at 32—and the Charter gave him (including London weighting) £415, or £10 more. It was true that the civil service figure went up to £450 at 35, but the civil service employed large numbers of unestablished staff whose rates of pay were substantially lower.

The fifty motions and amendments on the agenda criticised the award; censured the N.E.C. representatives on the National Joint Council; recorded grave concern at the way the staffs case had been handled; deprecated the failure of the N.E.C. adequately to represent the interests of local government officers; directed that negotiations be opened without delay to obtain improved standards, a cost-of-living bonus, higher weighting for London, and weighting for other large towns; set out entirely new scales intended to supersede the present ones; demanded, without delay, uniform grading on a national basis; insisted that no claim should be submitted to the employers without prior submission to district committees; and, finally and inconsistently, directed that the Whitley council machinery should be speeded up.

How Whitleyism Works

Implicit in many of the demands was the impression that the employers could, by some miracle, be persuaded to accede at once to all requests. But things were not like that. Claims could only be got through if the employers—chosen by their provincial councils because they were "tough nuts"—could be persuaded that they were just.

Members must understand how Whitleyism worked. The staff side made proposals; the employers did not, as a rule, accept them. There was discussion and argument. Counter-proposals were made. The two sides adjourned for separate consultation. The end was either complete disagreement and deadlock, or compromise—agreement resulting from concessions on both sides. How could concessions be made if both sides were tied by instructions from which they could not depart? Negotiators must be free to negotiate. It did not help the staff side to be told that this, that, or the other should be demanded. Branches might supply new facts or new arguments—but they did not do that. They had been asked, on February 7 last year, to submit information which would be helpful to the staff side in negotiating the bonus claim. Less than twenty replied—and they did not provide a single fact or argument not already known to Headquarters.

Local government salary standards to-day must be considered in the light of the general economic situation. There were national and world shortages, due to the devastation of war. The trouble was not too little money, but too few goods.



Interested delegates in the gallery

Bigger salaries generally would not remedy the position, but would aggravate it by leading to inflation, the effect of which would be felt most keenly by the salaried class.

But local government officers had held their own in the struggle for increased incomes in comparison with employees generally.

The "Ministry of Labour Gazette" for April, 1948, showed that the average earnings of six million workpeople, exclusive of overtime, was about 61 or 62 per cent. higher in October, 1947, than in October, 1938. How did that compare with local government? In 1939 there were six provincial council scales, of which that for London, going to £300 at 31, was the highest. But that scale had been adopted by only eight out of the 27 metropolitan boroughs. The other scales—not one of which had been generally applied—gave maxima of £190 at 26 (Lancashire and Cheshire); £300 at 37 (Middlesex); £160 at 26 (North Wales); from £180 at 26 to £260 at 31 (West Midlands); and £225 at 27 (Yorkshire). To-day, every General Division Officer went to a maximum of £385 at 32, plus weighting if he lived in London.

The most widely adopted of the pre-war scales were those of Lancashire and Cheshire. They gave £190 at 26, compared with the Charter's £305 at the same age; a Clerical Division maximum of £255 compared with £485 under the Charter; a miscellaneous division maximum of £280 compared with £420 under the Charter, and an APT division maximum of £460, compared with £760 under the Charter.

"Better Than Civil Service"

Comparing the proportional increases received by civil servants and local government officers, Mr. Bevan said that the clerical division of the civil service gave £320 at 38 in 1939, and £430 at 28 in 1948, whereas in local government, the 1939 provincial scale of £190 at 32 had been replaced by the Charter General Division maximum of £385—a much greater increase.

It was the same in the railway service. While railway clerks' salaries had risen from £180 at 28, in 1939, to £312 at 32 today, those of local government officers had risen from £190 at 26 in 1939 (Lancashire and Cheshire) to £305 at the same age and £385 at 32 today.

Few electricity and gas staffs in company employ had had better scales than the Charter; many, particularly in gas, would be grateful for the despised Charter rates.

It did not help claims for better standards to deny that, taking the Charter as a whole, it represented a tremendous step forward. They could not ignore the implications of the Government's White Paper on incomes, costs and prices, and the growing danger of inflation. It was not weakness to face the facts—but it would be folly to ignore them. The Association had not secured

Call for "Energetic Action" to Improve on Charter

anything like what it considered to be its due. The arbitration award had been a serious disappointment. But progress had been made. He was not pessimistic; he believed in hitching his wagon to a star—but he wanted to keep at least one foot on the ground (loud and prolonged cheers).

Replying, Mr. Forman strove to draw the ground from beneath the foot that Mr. Bevan had so firmly put down, but delegates had either lost faith in the star as a means of traction, or found it in their negotiators, for they overwhelmingly rejected the motion and welcomed the representatives of Sunderland and Heston and Isleworth, who quickly rose to withdraw their motions censuring the N.E.C. and the staff side.

Loyal to his branch's instructions, M. A. JAMES,



The confident vigour of a Boadicea . . .

N. Northants, diffidently moved an expression of "keen disappointment" at the arbitration award and "grave concern" at the way in which the case for the staff side had been handled. For himself, said Mr. James, he considered that the motion should never have been tabled, but it was a majority decision of his branch—whereupon A. W. A. EVRY, S.W. Gloucestershire, came to his rescue with an amendment to delete the expression of "grave concern at the way in which the case for the staff side has been handled." This was supported by L. C. ST. LEGER YEEND, N.E.C., with the comment that members did not realise how much hard work was put in by the N.E.C. Conference almost unanimously adopted the motion as amended, decisively rejected a motion by Hazel Grove and Bramhall, expressing lack of confidence in the N.E.C., and allowed two—one by Heanor, deprecating "the submissive attitude of the staff side," and one by Wanstead and Woodford, expressing dissatisfaction at the handing of the claim—to be withdrawn.

"Re-open Negotiations"

But delegates were to go further yet, and when C. B. HEARN, Eastern, sought permission to incorporate with his motion—expressing dissatisfaction with the award and asking that negotiations be reopened—a West Suffolk amendment recording "appreciation of the able manner in which the staff side has carried out negotiations" it cheerfully agreed. To this G. E. DENT, North Eastern District, added a further amendment, urging the council both to "reopen negotiations" and to "take steps immediately for the removal of the anomalies created by the award with effect from January 1, 1948," and, after E. R. DAVIES had accepted the motion and both amendments on behalf of the N.E.C., Conference adopted them unanimously.

Of the ten remaining amendments, eight were withdrawn by delegates rising in quick succession from their seats, and two were lost. The first of these, tabled by Tottenham, asked for "an adequate cost of living content in consolidated salaries in all the scales," and the second, by Birmingham, sought, in addition to immediate revision of the existing salary scales, the removal of anomalies, "an increase in the London weighting and the weighting of the national scales in favour of officers of the corporation of large provincial cities." Asking Conference to reject this, L. H. TAYLOR, N.E.C., said that London "weighting" had been dealt with so recently that it would be futile to raise it again on the National Joint Council, and the time was not ripe for provincial weighting. Supporters of the motion demanded a count on this, but it was decisively defeated by 526 votes to 377.

The critics having been thus effectively routed, Conference relaxed for a few minutes to hear

Lt.-Col. DEREK WALKER SMITH, Conservative M.P. for Hertford, and one of NALGO's particular friends in the House of Commons. Observing that the best attitude of mind in which to face official responsibilities was a constructive and courageous humility, Col. Walker Smith said that an apt test of a democratic community would be whether its officials existed to serve or to boss it (cheers). As in the Army an officer's first responsibility was the welfare of his troops, so, in local government, an officer's primary duty was the welfare of the community which he or she served (cheers). It was a tribute to the quality of the service in this country that the great extension in local government activity in the past decade or two had meant an increase of duty rather than of power and privilege. He believed that a genuine system of local self-government depended for its efficiency and continuity on the "standing army" and "professional cadres" of local government. He called on them to guard jealously the freedom of local government entrusted to their care and wished them "God speed" in their great task (cheers).

Thanking the speaker and Ald. T. W. BURDEN, Labour M.P. for Sheffield (Park), an even older friend of the Association, unfortunately prevented from attending Conference, Miss F. E. POLE, Leicester, declared that NALGO was fortunate in having two such capable supporters in the "holy of holies."

CHARTER AS A MINIMUM

"Last Year's Demand Renewed"

It was with appreciative delight that delegates welcomed to the microphone a refreshing vision of youthful vitality and self-possession, in cool pink and pale blue—Miss P. E. TAYLOR, L.C.C., moving the Metropolitan District and L.C.C. branch motion reiterating last year's demand that the Charter be regarded as a minimum, expressing "grave concern" at the N.E.C.'s apparent unwillingness to give effect to the decision, and calling for "energetic action" in support of it. Speaking with the confident vigour of a Boadicea riding into the Roman legions, Miss Taylor declared that the events of the past year had shown the wisdom of the 1947 decision. The most backward and tight-fisted section of the employers dominated the National Joint Council and imposed on NALGO's negotiators a heart-breaking task. Rather than malign them, members should search for more hopeful lines of approach. Once they had established the Charter as a minimum, they could seek local improvements, which would establish useful precedents for further advance. For example, the N.E.C. had said that Saturday morning leave could not be taken up at present at the national level. Then let them seek it locally, as a basis for negotiations at the top later (hear! hear!). With the Charter as a minimum, branches would not be shot in the back, for daring to try to improve on it. There was reasonable hope of persuading some provincial councils to improve standards and other employers would have to follow.

Then, turning the lash of her tongue on the N.E.C., Miss Taylor acidly inquired what it had done to give effect to the decision of last year's Conference. It had made a thorough survey of the ground behind it. It had analysed a few instances where the Charter had caused loss to the officer. Yet there was no hint in the annual report that such losses formed a basis—almost the only basis—for future claims. It looked as though, showing the strength of their hand, they had first delayed as long as they could, and then, quietly and deliberately, played their trump card—no further action (laughter). Members were entitled to express concern at such tactics; the time was long overdue for making the Association's policy effective (loud cheers).

Springing to Miss Taylor's support, A. F. HUTT, Manchester, said that Conference had heard some excellent advice on the principle of "Softly, softly, catchee monkey." The result of following it might be disastrous.

Mr. Hutt wanted to go on, but delegates had already made up their minds and, demanding that the question be put, adopted the motion without waiting for any reply by the N.E.C.

Then J. MERCER, Liverpool, invited Conference to deplore the lack of guidance by the National Joint Council on the application of Charter con-

ditions and to instruct the staff side to press for (a) a clear definition of the term "officer," and (b) national scales to accommodate all persons so defined. The motion, he explained, was prompted by the difficulty of applying the Charter to those whose duties could not be classified as clerical or A.P.T. They were in a minority, but they were carrying out important duties—and in Liverpool alone there were 900 of them. The N.E.C. accepted the motion, and Conference approved.

TOO MANY SCALES

"Serious Dissatisfaction"

After Glamorgan and Dorset county branches had withdrawn their motion seeking early improvement of salary scales, E. POINTER, Norwich, moved a proposal for fewer scales, with no overlapping between them. Widely different interpretations put upon duties by local authorities had, he complained, led to serious dissatisfaction which had not been set right by appeals. The present scales offered many opportunities for local authorities to prevent an officer's progress.

Opposing for the N.E.C., L. H. TAYLOR reminded Conference that the present scales had been achieved only after years of agitation and negotiation. They had been generally applied, staffs had been graded, thousands of appeals had been heard, and a measure of justice had been done. There was no prospect of inducing the employers to scrap them and begin again.



Miss P. E. TAYLOR—"Make your policy effective"

T. J. METCALFE, Smethwick, moving an amendment leaving unchanged the general principle of the motion, but omitting the clause seeking to tie the negotiators to specific scales, declared that the fewer the grades covering the same salary scale the better and the more chance of uniformity in the grading of officers performing similar duties.

C. G. WELLS, Deal, opposed both motion and amendment, arguing that a reduction in the number of scales would be detrimental to the staffs of smaller authorities.

To this, Mr. Pointer replied that the motion had been tabled at the request of officers of some of the smaller authorities in Norfolk. The employers themselves had agreed that there were too many scales. Notwithstanding this information, however, Conference rejected both motion and amendment.

Then, E. NEWELL, River Trent Catchment, moved a lengthy motion seeking, amongst other things, an immediate improvement in the General Division; a reduction from nine to five in the number of A.P.T. grades; an increase of the A.P.T. maximum from £760 to £850, of the Clerical maximum from £440 to £485, and of the Higher Clerical maximum from £485 to £525. The motion was not intended, he insisted, to tie

New Goals—£385 at 26 : Proper Recognition of Blackcoats

the hands of the N.E.C. A new maximum of £450 was suggested for the General Division, but £425 might be accepted as a compromise.

At this point, J. P. PHOENIX, Liverpool, came to the microphone to shorten the debate by opposing the motion and "most of the subsequent motions and amendments," which, he suggested, sought to put the negotiators in the unhappy position of a car-driver suffering from a back-seat passenger—with the wrong map (laughter). It would be odd if the N.E.C. had no inkling of where it was going. It should really not be subjected to "all these fiddling details." Of course, they all felt strongly that the maximum of the General Division should be reached at a much earlier age: young men deserved a decent wage on which to marry, but in the General Division, at least, there was too little money chasing a little bit of goods (laughter). But the present position had been forced on the negotiators.

HOW TO IMPROVE SCALE

"Begin With Electricity and Gas"

Conference supported this view, rejecting the motion—but that did not deter P. ASHEN, Birmingham, from moving a request to the N.E.C. to press for revision of the General Division scale to enable the maximum to be reached at age 26. He realised that the N.E.C. could not go at once to the National Joint Council, but they could begin with the electricity and gas councils, and so create a precedent for the rest. Conference appreciated such a combination of temerity and brevity and, notwithstanding its earlier acceptance of N.E.C. advice, adopted the motion.

Content with this victory, the movers of the five motions and one amendment following—all seeking a lower age for the General Division maximum—tautly withdrew, leaving the rostrum free for J. O. EVANS, Coulston, to call on Conference to deprecate "the apparent lack of action on the part of the N.E.C." in implementing the 1947 resolution calling for separate grades for typists, shorthand-typists, machine operators, and supervisors. He could not agree, he said, that the increases obtained in the General Division had met this claim. The women concerned deserved separate grades because they had to qualify for their posts. R. M. CREED, Croydon, seconding, said that to step up the scale by two or three years for new entrants was no solution, since it ignored those already in employment. The employers were ready to pay higher salaries to recruit the shorthand-typists and machine operators they were to-day unable to get.

Men's Rates For Typists ?

J. D. S. MOUNTFORT, L.H.C.J.E.A., moved an amendment suggesting that the women covered by the motion be paid the rates applicable to men. But such male concern for the welfare of the gentle sex did not commend itself to Miss MARGARET HAMILTON, Glasgow, who, though herself a shorthand-typist, complained that, although the motion opened up the possibility of special pay, it did not specify the grade, and might therefore lead to a lowering of the grade. The amendment would be acceptable if it stipulated that the rates proposed were a minimum. She did not care for the idea that a supervisor might not receive more than the maximum of the General Division.

Supporting the motion, Miss M. J. DAVIS, Sheffield, pointed out that the post of machine operator was a new one, requiring specialised knowledge. Complicated machines were used by electricity undertakings all over the country, and in general, operators received lower salaries than they would do outside although they were expected to have a high output.

But Conference rejected both motion and amendment after J. MOSS, N.E.C., had reaffirmed that NALGO's policy was equal pay for men and women doing similar work, and declared that the Council could not be party to special grades for a class which was almost exclusively feminine. Besides, many hundreds of supervisors, secretary shorthand-typists, and senior shorthand-typists were already enjoying saaries on the Clerical, Higher Clerical, and A.P.T. Division scales.

Finally, S. A. HUGHES, Metropolitan district, called for amalgamation of the General and Clerical Divisions, with the present General

Division maximum reached at 28, but Conference rejected the motion without debate and adjourned to Thursday morning.

When delegates reassembled next morning for the third and final day, it was apparent that a few, at least, had realised how far Conference was behind its time-table. Of the 285 items on the Agenda, 112 had been disposed of in two days. There remained 173 to be considered in the 5½ hours remaining, and it was not surprising, therefore, that the proceedings should open with a request for a stricter time-limit on speeches. The President resisted this, but agreed



General Division—"Too little money chasing a little bit of goods"

that the N.E.C. should tell Conference which items were acceptable to it, thus enabling non-contentious matter to be rushed through without debate.

L.G.O.'s PART IN PRODUCTION

"Their Services Essential"

It was in this difficult atmosphere that J. P. PHOENIX, Liverpool, opened the last day's batting with a motion, advanced to this priority position because of what was hoped would be its publicity value, inviting Conference to deplore "the tendency of official and semi-official pronouncements to regard black-coated workers, including local government officers, as not contributing to the productive effort of the nation," express its conviction that "maximum national productivity cannot be achieved without efficient administrative and technical services," and direct the N.E.C. to "co-operate with any comparable organisation in an effort to obtain proper recognition of the work performed by many thousands of loyal and hard-working citizens."

It had been pointed out, said Mr. Phoenix, that there was no eloquence like that of the woman who was suffering in silence. The so-called black-coated workers had suffered in silence for a long time, and they were entitled, if not to eloquence, at least to some expression of their feelings.

There was another saying: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." The black-coated workers seemed to have been inheriting it a stone at a time—an extremely painful process (laughter). They might make a good case about the extremely hard incidence on them of taxation and the toughness of the wage policy—or lack of policy. But that was not the main point, which was that they could not hope to receive their right reward unless they were held worthy of it.

It must be admitted that, in some circles, the man who worked with his brain was not held in high regard. The work of the black-coats looked fallaciously easy, and they lacked that solidarity, based on mutual respect, which was found among craftsmen.

There could be no doubt that local government officers were doing productive work (near! hear!). The country as a whole needed all the decent working people to hold together. If that were achieved, the man working with his hands would agree that he was served by the black-coated workers, just as he served them in his turn. There could be no unity without a sense of comradeship (cheers).

Miss M. TOWNSON, Liverpool, seconding, said it was right that the Government should recognise

the magnificent efforts of men and women in the factories, making goods for the home and export markets; but the black-coated workers, including local government officers, were also making their contribution towards national recovery. The local government service was proud to assist and to recognise that the nationalisation of major industries, and the extension of social services, would call for a high standard from managerial, executive, and clerical staffs if the complex problems of administration were to be solved. All they asked was that the Government should acknowledge that the black-coated workers, though not directly employed on production, were essential and were playing an important part in industrial and social welfare (cheers).

L. O. GOODEN, Hants County, supporting, said that, while he had never claimed supremacy for the white-collar worker, neither did he accept the supremacy of the man in the muffer. Black-coated workers were one and equal with the more "productive" workers. He hoped the motion would be passed without delay, so that they could "get cracking" with the business of the Conference (cheers). Conference agreed, adopting the motion unanimously, with acclamation.

"Break Down International Barriers!"

R. E. GRAY, Bognor Regis, followed with his branch's motion urging the N.E.C. to foster better international understanding by promoting schemes for work and holiday exchanges between local government officers in this country and their colleagues overseas. Such interchanges, Mr. Gray urged, would help to break down the barriers of stupidity, ignorance, and intolerance which still existed between nations (cheers).

For the N.E.C., A. E. ODELL expressed sympathy with the object of the motion. The Council was already associated with the Education Interchange Council, through which some of the measures desired might be achieved when the international situation permitted; but he could not hold out any prospect of interchanges on an appreciable scale in the near future. The Council would, however, support the proposal as a long-term policy, and with this assurance Conference approved it.

NEGLECTED CHILDREN "Compel Councils to Prosecute!"

There followed a moving speech, all the more effective for the quiet sincerity of its delivery, from F. G. C. ELWICK, Education Welfare Officers' National Association, in support of a motion calling for amendment of the Children and Young Persons Act, 1933, to provide that local authorities *must* make inquiries and take proceedings in cases of child neglect.

Education welfare officers, said Mr. Elwick, saw with their own eyes much human suffering which they were often powerless to prevent; he had himself seen a child die because no one would take the responsibility of prosecuting. In doubtful cases the risk was well worth taking since, even if the prosecution failed, the child would at least have been sent to hospital for a time and might be restored to life. While agreeing that the responsibility of prosecuting was, to-day, usually left to voluntary societies, Mr. Elwick denied that his motion involved local authorities fighting the voluntary societies for the bodies of neglected children. The point was what was best for the neglected child.

N. W. BINGHAM, N.E.C., assured Conference that the Council had much sympathy with the sentiments expressed by the mover of the motion. Before voting, however, Conference should realise all the implications of the proposal. The Act provided that prosecutions for alleged child neglect might be taken by the police, the local authority, or the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The N.S.P.C.C. was recognised by Statute and by Home Office Regulation as having a special position, and its reputation stood high among social welfare organisations. If this simple-sounding motion were passed, the conclusion would probably be drawn publicly that NALGO had decided to open an attack on the Society (cries of "No!"). They might find themselves accused of acting not primarily in the interests of the children, but in the interests of their own members, who would be taking over the functions of the N.S.P.C.C. (cries of "No!").

Hardy Annuals—Grading, Weighting, Overtime, Leave

It would have been more helpful, he suggested, if this controversial issue had been brought in the first place to the Joint Consultative Committee, which would have given the N.E.C. an opportunity of considering all its aspects. The N.E.C. could not accept the motion as it stood, but if it were brought to the Joint Consultative Committee would see what could be done.

Support for the motion came from J. DIXON, West Riding, A. BATLEY, Leeds, G. W. BENNISON, Liverpool, and W. WOODALL, Warrington. Wind-ing up the debate, Mr. Elwick assured Mr. Birmingham that it was not the intention of supporters of the motion that the local authority alone should prosecute. Their object was to ensure that the job was not shuffled off to somebody else and that neglect did not continue for years because there were not enough N.S.P.C.C. inspectors to cope with the work. In view, however, of Mr. Birmingham's arguments, he was content to withdraw the motion in the hope that, having had this expression of opinion, the N.E.C. would take up the matter.

But Conference, its emotions touched, refused to allow the motion to be withdrawn, insisted on a vote, and carried the motion against N.E.C. opposition by an overwhelming majority.

Review of Grading Urged

These first three motions had taken up nearly an hour, and it was with a sense of growing urgency and impatience that Conference returned to the Charter and its problems, opening with a Solihull motion directing the N.E.C. "forthwith, and as a matter of emergency, to open negotiations with the employers' side of the National Joint Council with a view to a general revision of all grades so that relative salary scales may bear some closer comparison to the responsibility of the duties undertaken."

Moving this briefly, J. S. FORMAN complained that under the Charter many officers had simply been put into the grades nearest to the salaries they were formerly receiving, while some clerical posts had not been graded at all. The object of the motion was to enable these officers to reach the higher grades commensurate with their increased responsibilities.

But for the N.E.C., J. S. UNDERWOOD opposed the motion, suggesting that it was illogical and unworkable. Any officer who thought he was not properly graded had a right of appeal, which had been exercised freely in the past two or three years. Conference agreed, and rejected the motion, whereupon Newport (Isle of Wight) withdrew its motion calling for uniform national grading of all comparable posts.

Without debate, Conference referred to the N.E.C. a Lanarkshire motion asking the N.E.C. to prepare a schedule relating age, qualifications, experience, and duties of engineers, architects, and surveyors, to be used as a guide to the fixing of appropriate salary grades, together with a series of amendments seeking to extend the motion to other classes of officers and to provide for consultation with their professional associations.

H. F. MARRIOTT, Chislehurst and Sidcup, followed by formally moving an instruction to the N.E.C. to press for a uniform London "weighting" of £15 at ages 16-20, £30 at ages 21-25, and £45 over 25—to which B. J. PARTRIDGE, Stoke Newington, submitted an amendment calling for "weightings" of £50 at 16-25 and

£75 at 26 and over in the County of London, and £40 at 16-25 and £60 at 26 and over in the rest of the Metropolitan district. Making a gallant bid for general backing, Mr. Partridge claimed that London "weighting" affected members everywhere, since provincial scales were related to it. Supporting, S. C. MULLETT, Bethnal Green, suggested that the higher figures had some support from the employers' side, and R. D. WHITLAM, Bermondsey, called on delegates to show the N.E.C. that they were not so complacent as it was about the results of the recent bargaining (cheers).

To this, however, J. PEPPER, opposing both motion and amendment on behalf of the N.E.C., retorted flatly that it would be impossible to get the National Joint Council to reconsider its recent award, and that Stoke Newington's figures were far too high. Even the present London "weighting" compared favourably with that in any comparable service except teaching (cries of "No!"). The Civil Service scale ranged from £10 on salaries up to £265 to £30 on salaries between £457 and £720; railway employees working within ten miles of Charing Cross got £10, and one of the "Big Five" banks paid £13 up to age 24, and £26 from age 25. These figures evidently satisfied Conference, which rejected both motion and amendment.

On behalf of the N.E.C. the President announced that it would accept a Manchester motion designed to extend the 38-hour week applicable to the bulk of the service to those few clerical officers who, because their work is associated with that of manual workers, are still required to work longer hours, and Conference adopted the motion. No delegate coming forward moved a Blyth amendment asking for a five-day week, it was dropped.

PAID OVERTIME FOR ALL?

"38-hour Week a Myth"

S. WILLIAMS, Glamorgan, formally moved that overtime be paid to all officers graded within the Charter—to which W. B. KAVANAGH, Pembroke, moved an amendment to delete the words "graded within the Charter." This was not simply a question of money, he explained. In the past three years evening meetings had greatly increased, with the result that, for committee clerks and chief officers, the 38-hour week was a myth. The long hours they were compelled to work decreased efficiency and cut them off from their families. But if they had to be paid overtime, finance committees would soon see to it that they did not work so long.

G. T. BELTON, N.E.C., questioned the wisdom of raising the overtime question at present, lest doing so threaten overtime payments altogether. The problem of evening meetings should be taken into account in fixing conditions of employment.

The amendment was defeated, whereupon T. J. METCALFE, Smethwick, moved to add to the motion the words: "and that officers required to work overtime within the terms of paragraph 9 of the Charter shall have the right to elect to receive payment therefor in lieu of compensatory leave." Pressure of work, he pointed out, often prevented officers from taking the compensatory leave due to them. In view of the increase in the number of evening meetings since the Charter came into force, salaries did

not to-day compensate for the hardships on those required to attend them.

Conference approved the Smethwick amendment, but rejected a further one, moved by A. A. DUMBRELL, East Sussex, seeking to instruct the N.E.C. to secure deletion from the Charter of paragraph 10 (e), (which prohibits payment of overtime when subsistence allowance is paid).

Before the motion as amended by Smethwick was put to the Conference, however, Mr. Belton warned delegates that they were running their heads against a brick wall (cries of "No!"). Acceptance of the motion would mean asking for overtime for officers getting £1,000 a year. But Conference ignored the warning and adopted the motion as amended.

There followed the Newport (Mon.) motion, in which an amendment by the South Wales and Monmouthshire district committee was incorporated, instructing the N.E.C. to press for double-time payment for work on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

"Longer Hours" Warning

Opposing this for the N.E.C., W. E. PIT STEELE warned Conference that application for favourable conditions granted to workmen might lead the employers to impose other workmen's conditions which were not so favourable—such as longer working hours.

As a whole, Mr. Pitt Steele added, the motions and amendments on overtime were untidy, suggesting a variety of rates and implying that overtime was done only by the office worker. What about the relieving officer or the midwife? If this question was to be taken up, they should prepare serious proposals covering all sections of the service. Conference heeded the N.E.C. warning and rejected the motion.

There followed a more comprehensive motion, moved by A. SMITH, Sheffield, urging the N.E.C. to press for time-and-a-half for overtime on Saturdays and Sundays, with compensatory leave if desired; an extra day's pay plus a day off in lieu for Bank Holiday work; extension of overtime payment to all officers covered by the Charter; and special provisions to compensate officers required to work regularly at week-ends or on Bank Holidays.

This motion, said Mr. Smith, was a sincere attempt to establish fair, moderate, and attainable rates of overtime for everybody. There must be a brick wall on the employers' side if they expected an officer earning £495 to work on Saturday afternoon or Sunday for the price of a meal ticket—and such brick walls were meant to be knocked down.

L. W. HORSFALL, Kidderminster, moved to increase "time-and-a-half" in the motion by "double time."

But L. H. TAYLOR, N.E.C., told Conference that the employers had granted the present overtime allowances most reluctantly, and repeated Mr. Pitt Steele's warning that, if it were raised now, there was a grave risk that the working week would be lengthened. Again, Conference heeded the warning, rejecting both motion and amendment—whereupon W. H. KIRTON, Sunderland, withdrew two similar motions tabled, by his branch.

The Council accepted, however, and Conference approved without debate, a motion by Tees Valley Water Board, instructing it to seek an improved holiday scale.

A DELEGATE'S DIARY



Sat. and Sun.—Nice to meet old friends.

Mon.—Represented branch at Reception.

Tues.—Interesting debates to-day.

Wed. and Thurs.—More interesting debates.

Pledge to P.A. Staffs : Examination Bar Rides the Storm

There followed a series of motions suggesting detailed improvements in the annual leave scales, but before they were put L. BEVAN, N.E.C., told Conference that the staff side of the National Joint Council had already submitted to the employers' proposals for improved scales, as follows:

Juniors up to 21	15 working days;
Officers over 21 and earning up to £300	21 working days;
Officers earning between £300 and £760	28 working days;
Officers earning above £760	at discretion of authority (minimum 28 days)

The above holidays were in addition to general and public holidays. Since these proposals were now being negotiated, Mr. Bevan suggested that the various motions and amendments on the subject should be referred to the N.E.C. This the movers and Conference agreed.

Show Them Reports—Good or Bad!

From holidays, Conference turned to the vexed question of annual reports, starting with an East Barnet motion, with which a Tottenham amendment was incorporated, seeking amendment of the Charter to secure that all reports, good as well as bad, should be shown to the officers concerned before they were submitted to the authority. Moving this, S. C. SMITH described the paragraph on annual reports as one of the worst features of the Charter. Under it, an officer might easily be taken to task before his council without realising the fact until afterwards. H. L. LAWRENCE, Tottenham, seconding, urged Conference to see that this "Gestapo-like" method was abolished.

But the N.E.C. spokesman, F. BAINBRIDGE, opposed both motion and amendment, pointing out that the Charter already provided for adverse reports to be shown to the officers concerned, and arguing that, if chief officers were compelled to show favourable reports also, they might tone them down rather than risk turning a man's head. No case of hardship had been reported to the Council.

R. ADAMS, Wimbledon, promptly challenged this statement, declaring that his own authority had adopted the procedure suggested, and experience had shown that there was no foundation in Mr. Bainbridge's fear—on which assurance Conference adopted the motion against N.E.C. advice.

Next, S. C. SMITH, East Barnet, moved that the N.E.C. press for an officer who was the subject of a report which he considered might be detrimental to his career, to have the right to appear and be represented before the committee or council concerned when the report was presented—to which G. E. ADAMSON, Boston, moved that the provision be restricted to an "adverse report," on the ground that this closer definition would prevent frivolous appeals. But L. BEVAN, N.E.C., opposed both motion and amendment, arguing that it might not be to the advantage of an officer to appear before an establishment committee to contest the accuracy or justification of an adverse report. Where the report was seriously adverse, it had always been open to an officer to consult his branch, and the district officer would, if necessary, make representations. Conference rejected both motion and amendment.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE STAFFS "Inadequate Absorption"

N. MCLEAN, Glasgow, drew attention to the plight of public assistance staffs in a long resolution deplored the inadequacy of the provisions made for their absorption by the Government departments to which their work was being transferred, pointing out that, although 7,500 were involved, only 2,000 vacancies were to be offered, and calling on the Government to implement an assurance given to the House of Commons in December, 1947, that 1,500 would be absorbed by the Assistance Board and 3,500 by the Ministry of National Insurance.

H. SAUNDERS, Kent County, seconding, said that, while he recognised the great efforts which had been made for these officers, the position was still unsatisfactory.

G. B. CREDLAND, Sheffield, urged that NALGO concert with kindred organisations to fight the injustice being done to some public assistance officers. T. SPENCE, Scottish District, declared that social welfare staffs had had a fair deal neither from the local authorities nor from the Government, and B. CREECH, Bristol, told of officers in A.P.T. III who had been offered appointments in the Clerical Grade, and temporary officers—who had been in "temporary" posts for seven years—who had been offered £4 16s. a week.

C. A. SMALLMAN, Birmingham, complained that, after carrying out a most unpleasant task for many years, public assistance officers were being tossed to the wind. There should be opportunities for some of them with the social welfare and assistance committees, which local authorities would soon be setting up, yet he was informed that some authorities were taking the view that men and women who had served as public assistance officers should not be considered worthy of appointment. If that attitude were being adopted, NALGO should go straight to the Ministry of Health and get it changed. At this point, P. H. HARROLD, chairman of the N.E.C.'s law and parliamentary committee, intervened to give delegates the latest information. In fact, he said, the Assistance Board was likely to take nearly 5,000 public assistance officers, not 2,000, as stated in the motion. Up to June 12, 5,311 had applied for posts with the Board or the Ministry of National Insurance. Of these, 303 withdrew their applications and 40 were not interviewed because they were sick or serving with the Forces. Of the balance of 4,968 who had been considered, 4,447 had qualified and offers of appointment would be made to most, if not all, of them by June 30.

Advice to Those Not Offered Posts

The position of the remaining 521 was to be discussed later with the Assistance Board, together with other outstanding points, including the question of the number of executive posts made available to public assistance officers—fewer than they were entitled to. The N.E.C. invited all officers who had not been offered posts to submit their cases to it, and also to press them locally, since the Council could deal only with the general position, not with individual cases. Some officers had been offered posts in grades lower than those for which they had applied: he advised them to accept provisionally, to protect their rights to compensation.

A meeting of representatives of the organisations concerned, held just before Conference, had shown that, in some areas, officers were doing very well, receiving three or four offers of appointments, but in others the luck of the game had gone against them. The N.E.C. would do its utmost to see that the transfer went as well as possible.

T. SPENCE, Scottish District, welcomed this statement and asked leave to withdraw the motion, but, on the President's suggestion, Conference agreed to refer it to the N.E.C.

Promotion Examination "Nightmare"

From the plight of public assistance officers, delegates turned to that of officers in the General Division, now barred from promotion unless they can pass an examination, and T. FERNLEY, Manchester, moved his branch's motion instructing the N.E.C. to press for the removal of the examination bar. Manchester, he affirmed, did not deride examinations. It supported the ideal of getting the best training. But it questioned whether this examination bar, looming like a nightmare ahead of many officers, did, in fact, promote efficiency. The argument, often advanced, that, if professional scales of salary were to be granted, there must be a professional examination test, seemed to be putting the cart before the horse. In the struggle to improve the Charter, the employers had said there was no case for treating local government officers as belonging to a privileged class of salaried workers—and, in fact, their worth was assessed below that of bank and insurance clerks: yet in no comparable employment was so stiff an examination test set at so low a level. Before an officer could undertake a job in the Clerical Grade, for example—a job calling for common sense and experience, but by no stretch of imagination

requiring professional qualifications—he must submit to a searching theoretical test which would be of little use to him in his work. Yet the Clerical Grade must be filled, and if they insisted on such a test they would be storing up a dragon harvest of trouble. Already the staff side had asked that the examination should not operate for the time being, because qualified men were not coming forward quickly enough. Why should they, when prospects were rosier in the banks, the insurance companies, publicity, and advertising? In Manchester, many brilliant men had recently been lost by the local government service to teaching, the civil service, and advertising?



"Manchester questioned whether the examination nightmare promoted efficiency"

other comparable walks of life, because, with their qualifications, they were not prepared to accept the low rates of pay. The examination bar, in short, was defeating its own purpose, and some believed that the employers regarded it simply as a money-saving device.

If employers wanted professional qualifications, they must pay professional rates. At present, they were getting something for which they gave little in return beyond a vague assurance that something would be done some time in the future.

D. WEATHERALL, Seaham, speaking as one of the "unfortunate" over 35 and without 15 years' experience who had taken the promotion examination (hear! hear!) urged that rejection of the motion would penalise thousands of officers who were giving devoted service but unable to specialise. Some, in smaller authorities, were drafted from one department to another to become "general utility" men; for others, the war had prevented study or destroyed the desire, and allowance should be made for these circumstances.

"Prodding for their Own Good"

W. H. WILKINSON, Chester, opposed the motion for three reasons:

1. The employers required the examination bar and it provided an incentive to officers to improve their value to the service and their monetary worth and encouraged them to take their future into their own hands: most people were lazy enough to need some prodding for their own good.

2. Until a better system was devised, the examination provided the only satisfactory means of assessing knowledge of a profession or occupation;

3. The injustice of the age-limit having been removed, he could not believe that NALGO members lacked the guts to tackle such an obstacle: if they did, they should resign forthwith and stand for Parliament! (laughter).

He repudiated the suggestion that ex-Servicemen were incapable of tackling the promotion examination: they had taken much worse obstacles and the majority were fully capable of overcoming this one.

G. E. NORRISS, N.E. London Electricity, also opposed, arguing that, by insisting on the examination bar, the employers had given the Association a two-edged sword which it might turn to good use. It was almost impossible to prove to employers that production in the service had increased—but, thanks to the examination bar, they could prove an increase in quality. If young officers were urged to qualify, it would be a strong weapon in the hands of the staff side. That was the only way, in the long run,

Plea for Recognition of Intermediate Examinations

by which standards of pay could be increased. Wherever conditions were better than in the local government service, it would be found that recognised qualifications were demanded.

M. H. COULTON, *Westmorland*, moved an amendment to add to the motion a provision to ensure that where an officer gained promotion through ability, he should be rewarded by adequate grading in comparison with his unqualified colleagues; otherwise, abolition of the examination bar would kill some of the incentive to study, and the desire to make the service better qualified would die with it (cheers).

Improvements to be Sought

For the N.E.C., A. E. ODELL, chairman of the education committee, reminded Conference that the Association had for years recognised the need for a well-trained and highly-qualified service. The Council, therefore, opposed both motion and amendments, but that did not mean that it was convinced that the present examination was the best that could be devised. They were awaiting the results of the first examination, and would consider whether any variations were desirable. There were many anomalies and problems of application which would have to be smoothed out. One concession had already been obtained, and others—such as alternative examinations—would be considered. In addition, the Council had asked the staff side to press for temporary deferment of the operation of paragraph 28 of the Charter, and this was to be considered soon. But such representations involved no departure from the policy of a well-trained and better qualified service, by which they stood. To press for abolition of the promotion bar would be detrimental to NALGO's aims.

Conference rejected the *Westmorland* amendment, and, Banstead branch and the *Metropolitan district* committee having withdrawn two further amendments, went on to consider a *Watford* amendment to require that the promotion examination, or other comparable examination recognised by the National Joint Council after consultation with the appropriate examining body, should be passed before an officer could enter the A.P.T. Division.

Moving this, R. W. LAW urged early consultation with all professional examining bodies to decide what was comparable standard to the promotion examination. The list of examinations already approved had not been subject to such consultation.

The amendment, however, was rejected, as also was one put by *Mid-Surrey* seeking to restrict the examination bar to officers in the employ of a local authority before April 1, 1930, and another, by *Salford*, to exempt all officers employed before September 3, 1939.

Three remaining amendments having been withdrawn, Mr. Fernley claimed a last word. He denied that the examination bar was an incentive to efficient service. Men were not coming forward for local government: they were going where the prospects were rosier. He would accept the onus of professional qualification if the employers would establish professional rates of pay.

Conference then voted on the *Manchester* motion and, a show of hands being inconclusive, the President ordered a count. This showed the motion rejected by 529 votes to 394, and delegates adjourned for lunch.

More successful was a *Worcestershire* motion moved at the opening of the afternoon session by F. ATKINSON calling for action to secure the recognition of the intermediate examination of a recognised professional institute as equivalent to the promotion examination.

The argument of the Local Government Examinations Board, that the intermediate examination of a professional body could not be accepted because it was vocational was, he said, a supreme example of wishful thinking. The Board's suggestion of a general intermediate, followed by a specialist final, would impose a bar on a keen youngster following his professional examinations, since the professional bodies would not accept the promotion examination in place of their own intermediate examinations—and what young man was prepared to spend two years studying for the promotion examination and then start all over again for a professional intermediate? He would be tempted to take the promotion examination only and drop the professional examinations—which would be bad for the service. Mr. Atkinson could not agree to side-tracking a man into general studies at the expense of his professional studies.

Wirral having withdrawn its amendment to restrict the concession to those who had served for at least five years in the Forces between 1939 and 1945, Conference unanimously adopted the motion with the inclusion of a *Birmingham* amendment adding to the examinations for which recognition was sought, the intermediate examinations for a university degree.

It went on to adopt, without debate, a *Burnley* motion instructing the N.E.C. to attempt to get clause 29 of the Charter, recommending local authorities to make grants of £15 for an intermediate examination and, £30 for a final, made obligatory instead of permissive.

R. A. SPEAR, *Newport (Mon.)*, withdrew—because it "did not make sense in the form in which it had been submitted"—his branch's motion on the same subject, while asking the N.E.C. to consider the point the branch wished to make—that examination grants should be paid annually so long as the officer concerned remained in the General Division.

GRADING DISSATISFACTION Many Appeals Unsuccessful

From examinations, delegates turned to grading appeals, starting with *Wrexham*'s call, moved by W. F. JONES, seeking provision for second and third stages of appeal in the event of failure at the first. In the North-Western district, he said, only about 20 per cent. of appeals had been successful—in some branches the percentage was even lower—and this had caused extreme dissatisfaction.

Opposing for the N.E.C., H. W. JOHN pointed out that there was already provision for appeal in two stages—first, to the local authority, and, second, if that failed, to the provincial council appeals committee. If the latter rejected the claim, it meant that not only the employers' side, but a majority of the staff side were against the claim, and in those circumstances the N.E.C. considered that the appellant must accept the decision. Should the provincial council appeals committee fail to agree, a third stage was available—the appeal might go to the National Joint Council. Conference rejected the motion, but adopted unanimously a motion by *Glamorgan County*, directing the N.E.C. to seek an

extension from three months to twelve of the time limit allowed for grading appeals in the case of a newly-created post.

NO MARRIAGE BAR N.E.C. to Ask for Assurance

Women next came to the fore with a *Metropolitan* and *South-Western District* motion instructing the N.E.C. to seek the inclusion in the Charter of a clause prohibiting the imposition of a marriage bar. To this, however, W. B. KAVANAGH, *Pembroke*, greatly daring, moved an amendment seeking to reverse the effect of the motion and require the adoption of a marriage bar "except in cases of hardship"—his branch, he explained, regarding marriage as a full-time



"Marriage a full-time job."

job. To his support came H. G. V. DAY, *Coventry*, with a warning that adoption of the motion would have a snowball effect, from which the children would suffer, losing the individuality they obtained from the British conception of married life.

L. BEVAN, N.E.C., supporting the motion and opposing the amendment, reminded Conference that it had been committed for some years to equality of pay and opportunity for both women and men (hear! hear!). That policy dictated that there should be no marriage bar. The Charter admitted this by implication, since it provided for maternity leave, and knowing some of the elder statesmen on the other side, he was sure they would not have put that in unless they intended to apply it to married women (laughter). The Council intended to ask the National Joint Council categorically to state that there should be no marriage bar in the local government service (cheers).

Conference promptly rejected the amendment by a big majority—but that did not deter F. TAYLOR, *St. Helens*, from moving a similar amendment, favouring the principle of the marriage bar save in cases of hardship, such as women supporting invalid husbands, and in professions such as nursing, where the withdrawal of married women would cause dislocation.

He failed to see, said Mr. Taylor, how the policy of equal pay for equal work could be substantiated when a married woman was working both in the office and at home. If she had equal responsibility with a man, she could not do a job at home as well—as he knew from personal experience (laughter). If posts above the General Division were to be held by married women, the promotion prospects of juniors would be destroyed. But Conference rejected this amendment, too, and proceeded to adopt the motion by a big majority.

Compulsory Review of Staff?

Mr. Taylor returned to the microphone, this time to move a *St. Helens* motion, with which he incorporated a *Bognor Regis* amendment urging the National Joint Council to ensure that all authorities review their establishments at least biennially, the first review to take place not later than March 31, 1949. St. Helens considered, Mr. Taylor explained, that local authorities had not accurately assessed the value of posts in the Higher Clerical and A.P.T. grades in the light of current salary levels—as was shown by the consolidation, which had given the holders of these posts no increases.

Lambeth withdrew an amendment calling for annual instead of biennial reviews, and



PLATFORM STUDY—E. L. Riley, N.E.C. chairman (centre), and G. Llewelyn, N.E.C. vice-chairman (left), concentrate on the debate whilst Miss W. M. Hamilton, administrative assistant, and J. H. Warren, general secretary (right), search the records.

Renewed Demands for "Equality" Campaign for Women

E. F. HEDLEY, South Shields, sought to insert a saving clause to provide against the risk of downgrading on review.

Opposing the motion and amendments for the N.E.C., J. PEPPER pointed out that the Charter provided for review of establishments "at regular intervals." The N.E.C. considered that any representations to amend this provision would be resisted by the employers. It regarded the existing machinery, in conjunction with trade union action when necessary, as adequate; moreover, reviews of establishments did not inevitably lead to improved grades. Conference took the hint, rejecting both motion and amendment.

One Service—One Joint Council

A. C. TEMPLEMAN, Dorset, followed with a motion instructing the N.E.C., "in view of the danger to the unity of the Association," to take all possible steps to ensure that one negotiating body only was established to deal with all officers in the local government service (other than those coming within the purview of machinery established to deal with public utility services), regardless of salary or grade.

To-day, said Mr. Templeman, many professional and technical officers, dissatisfied with what had been done for them, were turning to their sectional societies, or forming new ones, such as the Local Government Legal Society. NALGO could not afford to lose them. If it did nothing, and let them go, it would develop into a purely clerical association. Yet the N.E.C. seemed to be trying to encourage that tendency, for it had recently concurred in the establishment of two new joint negotiating bodies, one for town clerks and the other for chief officers and officers in receipt of a salary of over £1,000 a year. It had been reported that the Association had asked for representation on the second body, but had been told that all the sectional societies it consulted had agreed that it should not be represented. Conference adopted the motion, the President announcing that it was acceptable to the N.E.C.

Guildford branch withdrew its motion, demanding the submission to district committees of salary claims and offers before negotiations.

Speed-Up in Procedure Urged

E. G. EUINTON, Luton, followed with a motion expressing the view that the time taken by the National Joint Council in considering the claim for an increase in bonus was excessive, and asking the N.E.C. to consider how the procedure could be accelerated. His branch, said Mr. Eunton, hoped that the N.E.C. would

should be eliminated would get them nowhere; the only way was to get the employers to agree to different procedure and more frequent meetings. The latter was difficult—for most of the employers were busy public men. Conference accepted Mr. Martin's advice, rejecting the amendment but approving the motion.

"POLICY OF SECRECY"

More Information Call Rejected

Continuing to follow the lead of the N.E.C., delegates rejected Woolwich's motion demanding "an alteration in the structure and methods of the Association so that the rank and file membership have more knowledge of, and thus take a greater share in, negotiations." Moving it in the few moments impatient delegates allowed him, H. W. PENDRILL recalled that, a year ago, Mr. Riley had told Conference that it must decide whether it would press for a higher bonus or for consolidation, but gave it no adequate data upon which to reach a decision. Time after time, Conference was reminded that it decided policy—yet, time after time, the N.E.C. asked for complete freedom of action in negotiations. On the consolidation issue, they had been warned that they might be sold a pup—and they had got a very mangy mongrel, all because the N.E.C. refused to take the membership into its confidence. Present difficulties were due to the N.E.C.'s policy of secrecy. It had given no information at provincial, district committee, or branch level until it was too late for the rank and file to play its rightful part in efforts to get better pay and conditions. Conference, however, still smarting under Mr. BEVAN's lash, failed to respond.

Similarly rejected on advice from the platform was a Leeds motion, moved by E. REDSHAW, instructing the staff side to seek amendment of the recommended salary scales and emolument values for hospital stewards, W. PITTS STEELE, N.E.C., pointing out that hospitals would leave the jurisdiction of the N.J.C. on July 5.

Departing, for a moment, from the order of the agenda, delegates unanimously and without discussion approved two N.E.C. motions to amend and modify the rules of its staff superannuation fund. This duty accomplished, it returned to a Lanarkshire motion urging the National Joint Council and the Scottish Joint Industrial Council to recommend local authorities to set up local joint committees—to which Essex County proposed an amendment in stronger terms, instructing the N.E.C. to take action to have the establishment of local joint committees made mandatory on all local authorities. The N.E.C. opposed the amendment while accepting the motion, but Conference, inspired by a short, sweet, and acceptable speech by A. E. KAY, Essex County, pointing out that the optional way had been tried and had failed, adopted the amendment by an overwhelming majority.

FULL SEX EQUALITY

"Go Out and Get It" Demand

With the hands of the clock inexorably moving towards 5 p.m., the Metropolitan District and Tottenham withdrew their motions on equal pay, leaving the way clear for Glasgow's motion, inviting Conference to reaffirm its demand for full equality for women, and to instruct the N.E.C. to carry out, with other interested bodies, an immediate campaign, nationally and locally, designed to secure it. With masterly, psychological insight, Glasgow sent MARGARET HAMILTON to the microphone to move this, and she, playing with equal mastery the role of the frightened little girl, won a hearing where strong men had failed. Smiling sweetly at the massed and impatient ranks in front of her, she pointed out that, although the Government had accepted the principle of equality, it had not been prepared to apply it to the civil service. That left the N.E.C. with a tough job—and the motion was intended to help the "poor souls." She did not suggest that they should tie themselves to railings or throw themselves in front of horses, but there should be a definite plan of campaign, including newspaper and other publicity, to implement the policy. Miss Hamilton was going on to develop her argument when a gentle tapping of feet warned her that she had

said enough. She took the hint, and, breaking off in mid-sentence with a swift "O.K.!" and a wave of the hand, jumped down from the rostrum to a roar of appreciative cheers.

After this, it was in vain for T. NOLAN, N.E.C., to oppose the motion. He did so, he said, not because the Council was unsympathetic, but because it was already represented on or connected with every movement in the country working for equal pay, and therefore considered it unnecessary. But Miss Hamilton was having none



"Won a hearing where strong men had failed."

of that, and leaping to the microphone for a final word, said that that might be true—but they still had not got equality. She wanted the N.E.C. to go out and get it. A still cheering Conference carried the motion.

Two more Scottish motions, one, by Glasgow, calling for incorporation of the Scottish Joint Council into the framework of the National Joint Council for England and Wales, and the other by Lanarkshire, urging that the General Division maximum under the Scottish Charter be paid at age 26, with consequent salary adjustments within the grades, were adopted without debate.

B.G.S.A. Flouts Agreement

Then, on paragraph 72 of the annual report, L. BEVAN, N.E.C., told Conference with regret that an agreement on inter-union relations reached between NALGO, the British Gas Staffs Association, the National Union of General and Municipal Workers, and the Transport and General Workers' Union, had been abrogated. The British Gas Staffs Association had flagrantly disregarded the agreement in both letter and spirit, and was trying to "poach" NALGO members by making promises that could not be fulfilled. As a result, the agreement had broken down.

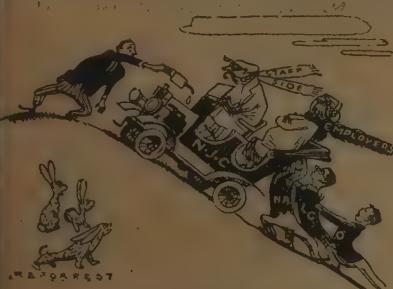
On the same paragraph, S. A. HUGHES, Lewisham, asked the N.E.C. to protect the rights of public health staffs of the London boroughs, many of whom, on transfer to the L.C.C., were likely to find themselves—as a result of the operation of the L.C.C.'s establishment rules—deprived of reasonable promotion prospects. Mr. Bevan replied that if Mr. Hughes would supply details, the N.E.C. would deal with the problem.

S. V. FRENCH moved a Finchley motion urging the N.E.C. to take appropriate action "with regard to the comparatively low salaries being paid for senior appointments under the new boards set up under recent legislation and which might have an adverse effect upon the salaries of the less senior appointments." To this, the North Eastern District had submitted an amendment, which Mr. French accepted, extending the resolution to salaries offered as well as paid and instructing the N.E.C. to accept nothing lower than Charter consolidated salaries for graded staff in the gas industry.

For the N.E.C., J. PEPPER replied that it had no evidence of these alleged low salaries for senior appointments. Conference, however, approved the motion as amended.

It was now 3.40 p.m., and, with more than 70 items still to be dealt with, Conference agreed, on the suggestion of J. H. E. PIPER, Bognor Regis, to give precedence to rule amendments.

The first of these, moved by J. HUNT, Derby, called for a rule to permit Conference to refer any matter to a referendum by ballot of all the members of the Association, the majority vote to be deemed to decide the matter as though it had been decided at Conference.



Mr. Eunton oils the "creaking machine."

use the motion as "a drop of oil to help the creaking Whitley machinery along."

Urging that the staff side should "show a sterner front," S. C. MULLET, Bethnal Green, moved an amendment to substitute the stronger construction: "and demands the elimination of all procrastination and delay in Whitley procedure." If only the N.E.C. would present its demands to the employers in the manner in which they were voiced in his amendment, he suggested, it might be more successful.

But G. C. MARTIN, for the N.E.C., did not think the employers so naive as to collapse before a blast of trumpets, however loudly blown. While supporting the motion, he said, the Council opposed the amendment because demands "that procrastination and delay"

Special N.E.C. Representation of Lower Grades Rejected

Asked, on a point of order, how the motion would affect the earlier decision to take a ballot on affiliation, the President said it would not affect that since the motion sought to change the rules for future procedure.

Opposing for the N.E.C., E. H. MASON pointed out that there was no need to make a standing rule, since Conference could at any time direct a ballot on a given issue, prescribe the requisite majority, and determine that action should follow in accordance with the result. To adopt a rule prescribing the kind of majority required would tie its hands. It was best to decide on each issue. Moreover, adoption of the proposed rule might encourage frequent resort to ballots, which the N.E.C. considered unwise.

Conference, however, rejected this advice, and adopted the motion by the necessary two-thirds majority.

Next, L. G. LAMBE, **Metropolitan District**, moved an amendment of Rule 3, dealing with the Association's objects, to substitute for paragraph (b)—“To improve the conditions and protect the interests of the Association's members” a new paragraph reading: “To take all steps, within the provisions of the Trades Union Acts, the Trades Disputes Act, and other enactments governing the powers and functions of trade unions, to maintain and improve the salaries and service conditions of the Association's membership.”

The object of the proposed change, he explained, was to emphasise that the Association's primary object was to carry on trade union activities.

But J. H. TYRRELL, for the N.E.C., pointed out that, in practice, the suggested new rule would be more restrictive than the old one. Already, as a certified trade union, NALGO had the benefit of the Trade Union Acts in pursuit of its objects. Conference agreed, rejecting the motion, whereupon S. C. MULLETT, **Bethnal Green**, withdrew his branch's motion instructing the N.E.C. to establish a “Fighting Fund” and include a “Strike clause” in the Constitution.

Subscription Concessions

Without debate, Conference adopted an N.E.C. motion to reduce to 6d. the monthly subscription payable by a member granted unpaid leave to enable him to take a course of training, adding to this a **Wimbledon** amendment to reduce the subscription of a member receiving half pay on account of sickness to an amount based on his reduced salary, with a minimum of 6d. a month.

Delegates referred to the N.E.C. a **Bognor Regis** motion to allow two or more branches within a district to combine to send a delegate to Conference, and adopted, by a narrow

majority, one from Perth, seeking to have all branch motions approved by the appropriate district committee before they could go on the agenda. With this, the mover, A. B. WESTWOOD, incorporated a **South Wales** amendment which would allow a branch, if it wished, to insist on a motion disapproved by the district committee going to Conference. After this had been adopted, however, the President pointed out that it did not call for a change of rule, but merely instructed the N.E.C. to consider such a change.

J. H. E. PIPER, **Bognor Regis**, returned to the microphone with a motion—with which he incorporated a **Glasgow** amendment—to provide that the annual report of the N.E.C. should be published not later than February 28 (instead of in April), that it should be distributed at the rate of one copy for every 50 members, and that motions for the Conference agenda should be sent to Headquarters by March 15 (instead of March 1). For the N.E.C., however, J. H. TYRRELL pointed out that such a programme would be technically impracticable and Conference rejected it.

N.E.C. MEMBERS

“Want Best Men of Whatever Grade”

Finally, Miss A. M. KIRKPATRICK moved a Chelmsford motion which would require one-third of the N.E.C. to be elected from members in the General, Miscellaneous, and Clerical Divisions, one-third from the A.P.T. Divisions, and one-third from the whole membership, irrespective of position held. To this, S. E. SHALICE, **Manchester**, moved an amendment to provide that members of the N.E.C. earning more or less than £760 should be in proportion to the respective numerical strength of those groups in the Association, provided that at least one member should be elected from each category in each district.

L. O. GOODEN, **Hants County**, opposed both motion and amendment, on the ground that interest in NALGO was in no way tied to salary or grade, and the Association wanted the best men for the job, whatever their grade. Conference agreed, rejecting both by an overwhelming majority.

In view of the earlier decision—reported on page 142—not to interfere with the rule governing representation at Conference, **Bethnal Green** withdrew its motion recommending a new scale. But Conference had not quite finished with this problem. From the platform, E. L. RILEY said that the decision to stick to the existing rule had put the N.E.C. in a difficulty. If the Rule 23 were applied literally, there might be 3,000 delegates at next year's Conference—and it would

be difficult to find accommodation for such a throng outside London, where Conference could have no social side. The arrangements for holding next year's Conference at Aberdeen were well advanced, but if the rule were applied the Association could not go there, nor to Cheltenham in 1950. In these circumstances, he asked Conference to authorise the N.E.C. to explain the difficulties to branches, and suggest that, for the next year at least, delegations should be restricted to the same size as this year. Evidently preferring Aberdeen and Cheltenham to the wastes of the Albert Hall, delegates agreed.

It was now 4.10 p.m., and Conference, returning to the point at which it had left the agenda to dispose of amendments to rules, was at last fully



“Conference was seized of the need for speed.”

seized of the need for speed—with the result that the remaining items dealt with were disposed of virtually without debate. Those adopted were:

By **North Eastern District**—urging the N.E.C. to endeavour to establish a national joint council for the staffs of water undertakings;

By **Holborn**—urging the N.E.C. to adopt a more vigorous public relations policy and take active steps to make the public conscious of the importance of local government in their daily lives;

By the N.E.C.—approving the future education policy as outlined in the annual report;

By **Essex County**—drawing attention to the apparent lack of consultation between the N.E.C.'s education committee and the staff side of the National Joint Council over the examinations recognised for promotion and calling for immediate revision of the education provisions of the Charter, including the list of alternative examinations, after consultation with the education committee.

Three other items were referred to the N.E.C. for consideration:

By **Oxford (Wessex)**—recommending a scheme of cultural education for members, based on correspondence courses, week-end schools, and maintained scholarships to Ruskin and other appropriate colleges, free of cost, together with a **Blyth** amendment urging the provision of four annual scholarships to universities for the sons or daughters of local government officers;

By **Holborn**—advocating the establishment of a NALGO Education Institute to direct all the Association's educational activities;

By **Oxford (Wessex)**—recommending the institution of correspondence courses for electricity students and the issue of interim certificates pending the establishment of examinations.

This concluded the motions on the annual report, but before Conference passed on to the remaining business, E. N. WATERS, **Hull**, expressed deep regret that NALGO House, the Association's convalescent home at Matlock, was to be closed on the dissolution of the Approved Society under the National Insurance Act. Since the Ministry of Health, to which it had been transferred, did not intend to use it as a convalescent home, would not the N.E.C. buy it back?

A. CLARK, N.E.C., replied that the Council had considered the point, but had decided that the purchase would be a bad bargain.

The annual report disposed of at last, B. J. EVANS, **Carmarthen**, possibly the last orator of the old school left in NALGO, came to the rostrum to move the traditional vote of thanks to the honorary officers and the N.E.C. in a voice that, disdaining the aid of loud-speakers,

HEAD OF THE “SILENT SERVICE” SPEAKS



J. H. WARREN, general secretary, replying to a vote of thanks to the staff, attributed to them the “unique distinction of being the servants of servants of servants of servants.”

P. H. Harrold Inducted as President for 1948-49

reverberated through the hall and even drowned the clink of tea-cups in the café outside.

He had often, he said, heard the N.E.C. described—as the Devil described the Ten Commandments—as a “rum lot.” But they were the people democratically chosen by the rank and file and upon whom immense responsibilities fell. The annual report, whatever else might be said of it, gave clear testimony to their diligence. They worked honestly: there was no doubt of their good intentions. Though many disagreed with some of their actions, all would agree that by their honesty, endeavour, and devotion they had cemented the work of their predecessors who had honourably blazed the trail in building up the Association to where it stood to-day (cheers).

E. L. RILEY, chairman of the Council, replying, hoped that the expression “rum lot” was not a reflection on their sobriety—although he confessed that the Council was always in good spirits (laughter). Some of his colleagues were retiring—to them he wished God-speed; a few had faced the ballot and gone down—he hoped they would live to fight another day. Those who had been returned again would endeavour to serve the Association well for another year.

After the general secretary had announced the result of the election of honorary officers (reported on another page), the President paid tribute to three senior members of the Council who were retiring and in particular to ARTHUR PINCHES, who had served continuously for twenty-four years (cheers) and who throughout that period had served NALGO with unswerving devotion.

Mr. Pinches' Farewell

Replying, Mr. Pinches said that once NALGO got into the blood, the bug could not be eliminated, and his only regret was that his retirement prevented him from continuing to serve the Association. He had first attended Conference in 1912—when it

was held in a school hall at Blackpool, with five or six rows of chairs—and he had attended every Conference save one since then (cheers).

It was now 4.40, and, with 39 items left, Conference began to race in earnest, delegates popping up like a series of jacks-in-the-box to move, second, or withdraw motions. But, since debate on anything was now clearly impossible, all were referred to the N.E.C. for consideration, until finally, at 4.47, it was moved from the floor, and agreed, that the last batch be referred in bulk to the N.E.C.—on whose behalf E. L. RILEY promised that they would be considered “on their merits.” Items dealt with in this way included:

Montgomeryshire's proposal for an appeal to the Government for more paper for text-books;

Northmet's request for a cost-of-living clause in pension and superannuation schemes;

A series of motions and amendments seeking improvements in the superannuation provisions;

Southend's call for action to safeguard the interests of officers in the event of changes in the structure of local government;

Darlaston's request for legislation to establish security of tenure;

Lancashire's claim that officers transferred to the civil service be allowed to count their local government service in claiming promotion and seniority;

Bilston's plea that leave of absence be allowed to delegates attending Conference (to which four branches wished to add “with pay”);

Birmingham's appeal against reduction or withdrawal of disability pensions of disabled ex-servicemen while in hospital;

Hazel Grove and Bramhall's request for a higher subscription rebate for small branches plus a South Somerset and District Electricity Co. amendment calling on Headquarters to pay the expenses of Conference delegates, and district committees those of district delegates.

Yorkshire district's request for publication of the scale of Benevolent Fund allowances;

Salford's complaint that charges at the NALGO holiday centres are too high;

The Scottish district and Greenock branch's plea for a holiday centre in Scotland with, in the meantime, a “rationing system” for booking for the existing centres.

Bristol and district's proposal for a NALGO “research organisation” to collate and provide information on local government;

Halifax and district's call for an information bureau able to provide information about advertised appointments in the service;

Manchester's suggestion of research into the appraisal of wages and salaries of local government and similar officers, to provide a more scientific basis for negotiation;

crest on a blue silken ribbon—round the new President's neck.

Acknowledging the warmth of their reception, Mr. Harrold said he was deeply sensible of the great honour—the greatest in the bestowal of NALGO—which they had seen fit to confer upon him, and that sensibility was enhanced when he thought of the great examples with whom it had been his privilege to associate in his long career with the Association. Troubles and difficult times were before them, and one of his objects would be to maintain, as far as lay in his power, the unity of NALGO in which lay their strength. He hoped also to convey to their new public utility colleagues, both those formerly in local government and those coming in from the companies, the sense that, although they were a minority, they were part of the Association and their interests were in safe hands (cheers).

It was now his privilege to move a vote of thanks to Mr. Newman. He had been a great President (hear! hear!), and his year of office had been lively and interesting. Members appreciated the stimulus of his original thought, his high standard of oratory, his maintenance of the prestige of the Association throughout the year, and his able and amiable conduct of Conference (cheers).

Thanking Mr. Harrold and delegates for their generous tributes, Mr. Newman acknowledged the kindness and friendliness he had met on his visits to branches during his year of office, and the happy disposition of Conference which had made it possible to get through so large an agenda. To further cheers, Mr. Newman turned to allow the new President to invest him with the Past-President's badge.

Tributes to Past Presidents

Then the new President conferred Past-President's badges upon three past Presidents for whom it had been impossible to obtain them during the war—COLIN ROBERTS (1943-4), A. A. GARRARD (1944-5), and F. H. HARROLD (1945-6). D. J. PARRY (1946-7), had unfortunately been recalled to attend a meeting of his council, but the badge would be sent on to him.

There followed the vote of thanks to the Mayor and Corporation of Bournemouth and the local Conference Committee, moved by Mr. Newman. Replying, G. H. W. LEGGE, secretary of the Bournemouth branch and the local committee, told delegates that the committee had been at work for eight months, and was gratified to know that delegates were satisfied with the arrangements made for them. He thanked his colleagues on the committee for their valuable co-operation.

Finally, the President expressed the thanks of Conference to the Association's staff who, from the general secretary downwards, exemplified the real NALGO spirit of teamwork. No association in the world was better served.

“Happy Ship” at H.Q.

Replying, J. H. WARREN, the general secretary, said the Association's staff had the unique distinction of being the servants of servants of servants of servants—and if delegates worked that out they would find it to be literally true (laughter). They were a silent service, but they had certainly to do a lot of preparatory work before the Conference—preparations for one Conference began immediately the last had ended—and he would like to mention especially his deputy, HADEN CORSER, and his personal assistant, Miss W. H. HAMILTON, who had been at his side on the platform throughout the proceedings. They were a happy ship at Headquarters, working cheerfully together in a good spirit—and he was sure that was the best way to serve the purpose and the needs of the Association (cheers).

And so, at last, at 5.20 p.m., with platform and delegates linking hands for the traditional “Auld Lang Syne,” NALGO's thirty-eighth annual Conference came to its end.



CONGRATULATIONS—After investing P. H. Harrold with the presidential badge, C. J. Newman, retiring President, shakes him warmly by the hand.



A. H. Aubertin (E)

Miss F. E. Pole (E Mid)

T. D. Bradford (Met)

L. Hetherington (Met)

H. A. Jury (Met)

L. G. Lambe (Met)

P. P. Rosenfeld (Met)



A. Smith (Yorks)



J. G. Jester (W Mid)



Dr. I. Hastilow (W Mid)



A. E. Kell (S W)

BIGGEST BLOOD TRANSFUSION FOR THE N.E.C.

TWENTY-TWO new members will take their seats on the National Executive Council as a result of the elections. This is the biggest transfusion of new blood to the Council in the Association's history.

Five members of the old Council were displaced, eleven did not seek re-election, and six new seats were created by expanding membership.

The new members are:

EASTERN

A. H. AUBERTIN, roads and bridges department, East Suffolk C.C.: executive member Eastern district committee and Eastern provincial council; former branch secretary; and instigator of local joint committee.

EAST MIDLAND

Miss FLORENCE E. POLE, transport department, Leicester: member staff side and appeals committee of East Midland provincial council; chairman branch and district women's sub-committee; and former branch chairman and president.

METROPOLITAN

T. D. BRADFORD, chief cashier, Hampstead: ex-chairman, staff side and present vice-chairman, London district council; vice-president, Metropolitan district committee.

L. W. G. HETHERINGTON, consumers superintendent, London Electricity: vice-chairman, London electricity D.J.C. and chairman staff side; member local government national joint council and chairman, South Metropolitan district council; first chairman, London Electricity (south-western) branch; chairman, public utilities sub-committee and electricity consultative committee; and former branch chairman and president.

HAROLD A. JURY, treasurer's department, Wimbledon: member, South Metropolitan district council; secretary, Metropolitan district committee; branch vice-president; and member N.E.C., 1939-43.

LESLIE G. LAMBE, accounts assistant, Croydon education committee: secretary, recruitment and organisation sub-committee of Metropolitan district committee; assistant branch secretary and executive member.

P. P. ROSENFELD, B.Sc., A.M.I.C.E., A.M.I.Mun.E., engineering assistant, Ilford: chairman, recruitment and organisation sub-committee of Metropolitan district committee; and branch P.R.O.

REGINALD B. WEBB, M.B.E., establishment officer, Westminster: deputy clerk, Metropolitan boroughs standing joint committee; member, London district council and former staff side leader; secretary, local joint committee; member, Metropolitan district committee; branch secretary and former chairman; and local government adviser, headquarters Control Commission for Germany, 1946-7.

NORTH EASTERN

ARTHUR GALLON, city engineer's department, Newcastle-upon-Tyne: member, North Eastern provincial council; chairman, North Eastern district committee; and branch secretary.

NORTH WESTERN

Miss J. A. DOWNTON, M.A., F.L.A., borough librarian, Preston: member, North Western provincial council and district committee; former member, national women's services sub-committee;

and branch president and executive member. During the war, served on regional committee, National Council of Social Service.

STEPHEN DUNCAN, B.A., F.C.C.S., M.R.San.I., publicity officer, Lancashire: branch vice-chairman; and former staff side secretary, East Midlands provincial council and East Midlands standing joint committee (institutional employment). Previously NALGO district officer, East Midlands.

A. F. HUTT, librarian, College of Technology, Manchester: member, North Western provincial council; staff side secretary, local joint committee; branch secretary and former editor of branch magazine.

J. P. PHOENIX, D.P.A., Information Officer, Liverpool: member, North Western provincial council; chairman, staff side, local joint committee; and member, district committee and branch executive.

Miss M. TOWNSON, D.P.A., welfare and records department, Liverpool transport: member, North Western district committee; and chairman, district women's services sub-committee.

SCOTTISH

THOMAS STEWART, chief accountant, Inverness: vice-chairman, area co-ordinating committee; branch president and executive chairman; for many years sole representative on the Scottish district committee of the original North of Scotland branch covering eight counties.

SOUTHERN

B. W. HEPTINSTALL, senior clerk, Bournemouth district service centre, Southern Electricity Board: member, electricity national joint council and Southern district electricity consultative committee; and branch secretary and public relations officer.

F. N. NUNN, superintendent social welfare officer, Portsmouth: member, Southern provincial council and Southern district committee; and chairman, local joint committee and branch.

SOUTH EASTERN

JOHN M. DELVES, D.P.A., Clerk, Tenterden R.D.C.: pioneer member of one of the earliest local joint committees at Conway; former branch chairman and member of Metropolitan, North Western, and South Eastern district committees.

SOUTH WESTERN

A. E. KELL, assistant chief clerk, Bristol Electricity: member, electricity national and district joint councils; member, South Western district committee and national electricity consultative committee; executive chairman, district electricity consultative committee; and former chairman, Bristol and district branch.

WEST MIDLAND

Dr. IRENE HASTILOW, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.C.H., D.O.B., R.C.O.G., deputy M.O.H., Rowley Regis, former branch president, executive chairman, and member, West Midland district committee; and co-opted member of local authority public relations committee.

JOHN G. JESTER, district assistance officer, Birmingham: member, local joint consultative committee; former branch president and member, district committee.

YORKSHIRE

ALAN SMITH, chief statistical officer, city treasurer's department, Sheffield: member, Yorkshire provincial council; executive member, district committee; adjudicator, provincial joint appeals committee; and branch executive chairman.



R. B. Webb (Met)



A. Gallon (N E)



Miss J. Downton (N W)



S. Duncan (N W)



J.-M. Delves (S E)



F. N. Nunn (S)



B. Heptinstall (S)



T. Stewart (Scot)



Miss M. Townson (N W)



J. P. Phoenix (N W)



A. F. Hutt (N W)

CONFERENCE MEETINGS—I

ELECTRICITY STAFFS' FINE YEAR OF PROGRESS

**19,000 Members | Whitley Machine | Good Relations | NALGO's Counsel
Out of 23,000 | Geared Up | With B.E.A. | Respected**

SPEAKING at the meeting of electricity delegates at the Town Hall, Bournemouth, on June 14, L. G. MOSER, NALGO's organising officer for electricity staffs, declared that the employers' and employees' representatives on their national joint council had always come together in a spirit of mutual help and endeavour to do the best they could for both sides.

"We in NALGO will do all we can," he promised, "to foster that spirit, because we are sure it will be best for the staffs in the long run."

They tended at times, he thought, to regard a joint council as two separate sides each seeking the greatest possible advantage for itself. That might sometimes be the case, but it was not so where negotiations were most successful, and it was certainly not so, as far as he could see, in the electricity conciliation machinery.

It was only two years ago, he recalled, that NALGO had opened its ranks to company employees in the utility fields. Then, the three main objects had been: to recruit company members as speedily as possible and so to gain, by vesting day, a dominant voice in matters concerning administrative and clerical staffs; to win recognition of the Association by company undertakings; and to safeguard the interests of the staffs to be transferred.

Big Majority On N.J.C.

How far had they succeeded? On April 1, out of a possible 23,000 members they had enrolled more than 19,000, of whom more than 8,000 had been company employed. The industry now boasted the most complete system of Whitley machinery yet known and NALGO had a big majority on its staff side. On the second point, although there was not quite so happy a story to tell, some companies had put their houses in order and the work which the Association had done would prove of great value in future negotiations. The regulations for superannuation and compensation for those transferred were not yet drafted, but NALGO would be well in the picture, and the standing of its legal department was such that its counsel would carry weight on the Employees' National Committee.

Nationalisation had brought its problems, some of which must be solved before the conciliation machinery could be put in motion. Provisional schemes had been introduced for annual leave, subsistence, and so on, to cover staffs for whom no precise standards had yet been laid down. Such schemes had not been negotiated by the national joint council but issued by the British Electricity Authority, which had assured NALGO that they were interim only and did not apply to staffs enjoying better conditions.

Filling of Vacancies

Turning to the thorny question of the methods of filling vacancies on the industry's staff, Mr. Moser admitted that NALGO, though expert in conciliation, had had difficulty in reconciling some of the requests put forward. "We had complaints by one post," he said, "that appointments were not extensively advertised, and by the next, that people from outside were getting them. We had complaints of the lack of interchangeability between the area boards and, later, that all jobs offered by a particular board went to people outside its area." He had approached the establishment officer of the B.E.A. several times and thought that there had been an improvement, but hoped to discuss the matter on the negotiating committee of the national joint council.

Their next problem was the reorganisation of branches and, possibly, the adaptation of the Association's machinery. There were at least eight active district consultative committees, which were tackling the reorganisation of branches and discussing the formation of staff committees.

An important question to be decided nationally was which grades were to be dealt with by the national joint council for administrative and

clerical staffs and which by the councils for manual workers, technical workers, and managerial staffs. On the consumer and commercial side, for example, some employees might be said to be technical or administrative. Further, no line of demarcation had been drawn between the administrative and managerial councils—and a bone of contention lay there. NALGO's view

On this and the two following pages we report the meetings held at Bournemouth during Conference week of electricity, gas, and health service staffs, branch education correspondents and public relations officers, and of the NALGO ancillary societies.

was that a person's classification as "administrator" or "manager" should depend solely upon his duties and should bear no relation to his salary.

It had been established that ex-municipal employees with outstanding appeals could go ahead with them, and that, if successful, those appeals would be implemented by the B.E.A. It had also been conceded that those who would have had the revised London weighting had they remained in local authority employment would get it just the same. "I find," Mr. Moser remarked, "that those who were not going to get it placed much greater value on it than those who found that they had got it."

The main task before them was the formulation of standards of salaries and conditions, which they would set about with open minds and no preconceived ideas.

The last meeting of the committee charged with this responsibility—the negotiating committee of the national council—had set up seven sub-committees. One was for general conditions of service, another for general, clerical, and secretarial grades, one each for commercial, accounting, legal, and other professional and miscellaneous staffs, and a seventh for outstanding company claims. Each sub-committee would go into the duties and responsibilities of the staffs with which it was concerned; they would work separately but come together frequently on the negotiating committee.

Interim Scale Proposed

It was not likely that company officers with outstanding claims would get all that they asked for; it might take a hard fight to get much less, but they could not expect to go to a nationalised industry and get, automatically, things which would certainly have been refused them by their old employers. NALGO would, however, push their claims as hard as it could.

The general clerical class sub-committee had been asked to consider an interim scale to operate until permanent ones were negotiated; for, although all wanted to get new permanent standards accepted as soon as possible, care must be taken not to spoil the job through rushing it.

There had been consternation and disappointment in many areas that NALGO had not secured a greater measure of representation on the district joint councils. However, although the representation had not been settled in three areas, NALGO would have at least 108 seats out of 150, and he would be disappointed if, eventually, it did not have a majority in every council.

The formation of staff committees was a job for district joint councils and should give all consultative committees food for serious thought. There was a general desire that the area covered by each staff committee should be small, so that everyone in the industry felt himself to be represented. On the other hand, a staff committee covering only a handful of employees might not be strong enough. Moreover, the minutes of staff committees were subject to confirmation by the district joint councils, and there was a limit to the number of sets of minutes with which a district council could adequately deal. There

was a limit to the number of meetings which important people in the industry could attend. Were there too many staff committees, the other side might be tempted to send, as representatives, officers whom NALGO considered should be on the employers' rather than on the employers' side.

It might be unwise to have separate committees for generation divisions and area boards and better, perhaps, to bring both into the same committee. By doing this, it should be possible to avoid having different conditions in different buildings.

Points raised in the discussion that followed Mr. Moser's address, included:

L. A. GORTON, Streatham Electricity, stated that a chief clerk in a company got less than a man at the top of the Charter general division and thought that company men should now be put on Charter rates and holidays. Mr. Moser replied that the general clerical sub-committee would consider an interim scale, but in respect of holidays, the B.E.A. could not be expected to do more than give everyone the same as last year.

Exchange of Information

In response to a suggestion by P. H. SEEL, Met-Electric—a consultative committee secretary—that consultative committees should exchange minutes because the problems affecting each area were common to all, the chairman, L. BEVAN, N.E.C., promised that this would be put to other secretaries in the next circular from Headquarters.

Miss M. DAVIS, Sheffield, complained that, in her sub-area, appointments were made without prior advertisement and that staffs of smaller branches had no opportunity to obtain such appointments, because they seemed all to be filled from headquarters. Mr. Moser agreed that this was happening in the lower grades and that it must be stopped, provided regard was paid to legitimate claims to fill vacancies by promotion. To this, A. WALKER, Shropshire, Worcester and Staffordshire Power, added that his branch had overcome the difficulty by approaching the chairman of the board, who had agreed that all positions should be advertised amongst the staff before being published in the Press.

A delegate reported that, in North Wales, appointments under £800 a year had been advertised and everybody had had an opportunity to apply. If every district had acted in the same way, there would have been no trouble.

G. E. NORRISS, N.E. London Electricity, deplored that only eight consultative committees were known to have been formed, and was told that other districts had probably set them up but had failed to notify headquarters. However, a letter would be sent to them.

W. C. ANDERSON, legal officer, agreed with a suggestion that voluntary contributors to national insurance should not suffer deductions for sickness benefit for which they had qualified by voluntary contributions.

"Tempered Optimism" on Charter

Answering an inquiry as to whether shorthand typists who took up jobs in the industry at rates higher than those of the Charter would go on reduced pay when the new scales were formulated, J. E. N. DAVIS, chief organisation officer, pointed out that the Charter provided that no officer should suffer a reduction as a result of its application, and that NALGO would try to get a provision of the same kind in the B.E.A. scheme. Asked what were the chances of persuading the B.E.A. to agree to something like the Charter, Mr. Davis replied that he was optimistic but that his optimism was "tempered with prudence."

Mr. Anderson reported that the employees' national committee had discussed superannuation with Ministry officials and Sir Henry Self of the B.E.A. A provisional draft scheme was in existence, but its only purpose was to enable existing staffs of the B.E.A. to pay pension contributions rather than face arrears when the final scheme came into operation, and to claim income-tax relief for contributions paid.

CONFERENCE MEETINGS-II

NALGO Finds Thorn-and Rich Pasture—in the Health Service Field

DIFFICULTIES encountered by NALGO in organising the staffs of the health and hospital services were frankly discussed by delegates meeting at the Town Hall, Bournemouth, on June 14.

Addressing them, G. W. PHILLIPS, organising officer, admitted that, though NALGO had six seats on the functional council for administrative and clerical staffs (as the chairman, L. BEVAN, put it: "NALGO was the biggest frog in that pool"), it had not done so well on councils for other groups.

The reason was that it could boast only 14,000 health service members, although the field of recruitment was enormous—it contained probably as many as 250,000. Therefore, NALGO's membership must be built up, and that could be done if—and only if—members would help wholeheartedly. They must become missionaries for the Association.

Mr. Phillips advocated the formation of special health service branches, and invited local government branches to act as their "fairy godmothers," helping them through infancy to full adult life.

The unit of organisation could be variable. New branches could be formed at hospital-management committee level or from the staffs of a single hospital, though the former might be preferable. They should also be formed from the regional hospital board headquarters' staff and, if membership warranted it, from the executive council staff. Each would send delegates to a regional hospital board area consultative committee, whose job would be to review conditions in the area and see that national standards were applied. They would have a fine opportunity to influence conditions and build up membership. From those committees would grow the national consultative committee, which would advise the N.E.C. on health staffs and choose those who were to represent NALGO on the joint councils.

While such a structure was being built up, existing branches should make a great effort to recruit hospital workers.

Joint Machinery the Main Task

Apart from recruitment, the Association's main concern was with the Whitley machinery set up by the Ministry of Health and composed of a central council, with nine independent functional councils, each with the task of laying down scales and conditions for a particular group.

NALGO had claimed representation on six of those functional councils, and had, so far, secured the following proportion of seats: on the administrative and clerical council, six out of 23; on the nurses' and midwives', four out of 41; and on the professional and technical, A, two out of 25, and B, two out of 18.

The administrative and clerical council—the most important from their point of view—was the first to begin work. Its staff side had set up standing committees for senior hospital administrative staffs—of which L. BEVAN, N.E.C., had been appointed chairman—for executive council administration officers, and for clerical grades.

The functional councils had not yet had time to lay down scales and conditions. The Ministry of Health had, however, without consulting the staff side, prescribed interim standards for headquarters staffs of regional hospital boards and those employed by regional hospital boards but actually working for hospital management committees. In his interim recommendations, the Minister had chosen the worse of two worlds: Charter scales, and civil service subsistence and travelling allowances. For, whilst the civil service, in some respects, enjoyed better salaries, its subsistence and travelling expenses were much inferior to those in the Charter.

The staff side had made the strongest possible protest and the council had appointed a sub-committee, on which there were four members of NALGO, to consider the staffs' objections.

The nurses' and midwives' council had not yet begun to function. The Rushcliffe committee, on which the Association had done such

splendid work (for which a great debt was owed to one of NALGO's past presidents, C. A. W. ROBERTS), had been wound up and the new staff side had met on an advisory committee. There was an enormous potential membership in this field if nurses would realise that good conditions came, not as manna from heaven, but from their own work and organisation.

Turning to the organisation of occupational therapists, psychiatrists, physio-therapists, and others covered by functional council A for professional and technical workers, Mr. Phillips warned that standards were being endangered by the activities of professional associations, to whom he appealed to leave negotiations to the trade unions.

Of professional and technical council B for dental technicians, hospital engineers, and others, he said that the staff side had met and that committees had been set up for medical laboratory technicians, dental technicians, dispensers, and hospital engineers.

The staffs wanted one machine for England, Wales, and Scotland, and NALGO would resist pressure for a Scottish council with autonomous negotiating powers.

Opening the discussion that followed, P. J. SCRIMSHIRE, Hertfordshire, recalled that the North-East Metropolitan Regional Board had given the working week as 38 hours, plus four hours "overtime," for which staff would receive

"Charter as a Minimum" is Association's Policy for All Gas Staffs

LONG before officers of company gas undertakings were organised, NALGO's membership included nearly one-third of the industry's staffs," said V. J. LUCK, organising officer, to the meeting of gas delegates at the Town Hall, Bournemouth, on June 14.

Those staffs, he continued, were enjoying the salaries and conditions laid down in the local government Charter and many company officers were, as a result of NALGO's negotiations, enjoying similar conditions. It followed, therefore, that NALGO's policy was "the Charter as a minimum" for all gas staffs.

Reviewing the comparative strengths of the unions organising gas staffs, Mr. Luck reported that, of the 22 staff seats on the National Joint Council for Gas Staffs, NALGO held seven; the British Gas Staffs Association, ten; the N.U.G. and M.W., three; the T. and G.W.U., one; and the Association of Supervisory Staffs, Executives, and Technicians, the C. and A.W.U.,

an extra eight per cent. of salary. He strongly protested against the officer being told to work extra hours, without the option, for less than the usual rate. The chairman replied that the directive authorising this arrangement had come from the Minister who had not consulted the unions. To this, M. W. G. GODDARD, Bedford County, added that many officers on the health side of a local authority had worked hours far in excess of 42 a week without overtime pay, and were therefore better off now than before.

H. H. YEA, Southern District, suggested that the correct approach to recruitment was to enlist the help of the local supporters of such bodies as the Royal College of Nursing, since many branch secretaries had little knowledge of the nursing profession.

R. RILEY, Manchester, thought that the move to establish separate health-service branches must come from health-service staffs and not from the local government branches.

"Oppose Scottish Council" Call

C. A. W. ROBERTS appealed to Scottish members to oppose the establishment of a Scottish council. In the Rushcliffe committee at least twenty occasions during the past six years the employers had quoted the low Scottish rates in opposing increases for England. They had played one country off against the other.

W. MORRIS, Sheffield, referred to the fact that certain officers of local health authorities would not have the option to secure the benefits of the National Health Service superannuation regulations, and asked why this should be so.

W. C. ANDERSON, legal officer, undertook to raise the point with the Ministry.

"Charter as a Minimum" is Association's Policy for All Gas Staffs

£290 for officers aged 25 in A.I. undertakings, he felt sure that better terms would be obtained for higher divisions, particularly in regions where NALGO held the majority of seats. In the South-Western region, where its members were in a majority, NALGO had succeeded in obtaining Charter scales for men over 25, but in a region where the B.G.S.A. held a majority, discussions had reached a stalemate.

Much as NALGO disliked separate regional agreements, it would try to get the best bargains possible before nationalisation, even if to do so meant entering into such agreements.

Mr. Luck reported that the B.G.S.A. had failed to observe the spirit of the "no poaching" agreement made with the N.U.G. and M.W., the T. and G.W.U., and NALGO, and that consequently those unions, though honouring the agreement between themselves, were free to accept B.G.S.A. members without reference to that association.

In reply to G. DIXON, Barrow-in-Furness, who asked whether the B.G.S.A. had recruited shift engineers, J. E. N. DAVIS, NALGO's chief organisation officer, said that there was no definite evidence of B.G.S.A. membership.

F. EADE, Brighton, Hove, and Worthing Gas, complained that some undertakings were grading posts too low or delaying adoption of the scales, and asked that a directive be sent from the national joint council to set things right. Mr. Luck thought, however, that the remedy lay in the appeals machinery.

Asked whether prepayment meter collectors' rates were covered by the manual workers' awards or by the national joint council, Mr. Luck answered that the treatment of this class of employee had varied. NALGO would continue to recruit them with a view to securing staff conditions for all. Their inclusion in the manual workers' award was merely a continuation of a long-standing practice in the industry whereby workers' awards were passed on to "marginal grades." The staff side of the national joint council had, however, formed a committee to discuss the matter with the workers' side of the joint industrial council, and it was hoped that a clear-cut line of demarcation would be drawn. Mr. Davis added that NALGO would continue to cater for borderline cases already recruited to its ranks.

T. FERNLEY, Manchester, said that he was sorry that they had not fought for full Charter scales. He believed that the acceptance of scales up to age 25 only was a retrograde step.

South-West Leads the Way

The South-West regional joint council is the first to adopt Charter scales in their entirety for male gas staffs over 25 in undertakings classified A1. Such officers will, in the absence of an adverse report, pass automatically to £305, rising to £385 at 32. Thereafter, scales follow the Charter. All undertakings (including Barnstaple) will be classified A1 except those at present in category D or E for manual workers, which will classify as A2.

Scales for women are under discussion.

NALGO has six of the twelve seats on the staff side of the council; one of the Association's representatives, F. ROWE, is vice-chairman and its district officer, F. SIGNY, is one of the joint secretaries of the council.

and the Association of Scientific Workers, one between them.

Of the 132 staff seats on the regional councils, NALGO held 58; the B.G.S.A., 52; the N.U.G. & M.W., 14; and the T. and G.W.U., 6—leaving two seats still to be allocated. NALGO had a majority on six of the eleven regional councils, and the B.G.S.A. on five.

A conservative estimate of NALGO's gas membership to-day was 8,360 out of the 25,000 estimated to be within the purview of the national joint council. The B.G.S.A. claimed 14,000, but that figure included valvemen, storemen, messengers, and others not covered by the national joint council.

Although the new national scales stopped at

CONFERENCE MEETINGS—III

Education Secretaries Board, Promotion Bar, Staff Training

L. E. ODELL, N.E.C., presiding over the meeting of branch education secretaries, at the Town Hall, Bournemouth, on June 14, emphasised the need for persuading members of local government joint councils to give more time to educational matters.

This could best be done, he considered, were a national joint council and each provincial council to set up education committees to watch over the administration of Charter education provisions. NALGO had an important part to play in the education of the officer, though the impression had got about that such matters were the exclusive province of the Local Government Examinations Board. They were, of course, an essential aspect of NALGO's trade union work.

Another important part of the Association's policy was to foster enthusiasm for education amongst its members, local authorities, and the local agencies. Even so, although a committee could lay down principles and suggest procedure, the work done by individuals mattered most.

The educational provisions of the Charter needed clarification and, although it was hoped, more long, to provide local authorities with practical staff-training schemes, there was no reason why local authorities should not go ahead with their own schemes—as some had done.

A feature of the year's work had been the re-statement of NALGO's educational policy, which applied, or would be adapted, to the needs of members in local government, public utility, and nationalised services.

In conclusion, he warned members that, though the promotion examination was by no means perfect, they must not make the mistake of assuming that the best remedy was its abolition. Much of their present trouble was due to the way in which the bar had been applied, but that could, and he hoped would, be rectified.

KENNETH CARTER, NALGO's new education officer, making what he described as "a personal declaration of faith," recalled that a few months ago he had been an ordinary member of the Association, and hoped that he would always be able to keep in touch with the ordinary member's views and needs. NALGO's aim must be to promote the spirit of public service amongst all officers. If it could do that, it would indirectly enhance their status and facilitate the improvement of their conditions.

Co-opt Employers' District Told

Third to the microphone was A. E. NORTROP, N.E.C., who urged those provincial councils which had not yet formed education committees to do so. NALGO's first step must be to ensure that all districts had education committees and that they had, wherever possible, co-opted employers to them. But it was not enough merely to say "we will have an area education committee." Where it was possible to group educational facilities in compact areas, he would like to see branches form sub-committees of the area education committees. They must create a demand from the local level.

Leading the discussion from the floor, several delegates described their local authorities' schemes for providing officers with text-books. **W. ENGLISH, Ilford**, complained that members did not support his council's scheme. **T. B. PONTON, Monmouthshire**, said that his branch had interested the county council in the educational side of the Charter, by running week-end schools. Now the council allowed students half a day off each week, and other facilities.

O. F. GEE, secretary, Southern district area education committee, asked the education committee to send to area education secretaries as speedily as possible all decisions of national importance which bore on education. The first of alternatives to the promotion examination, omitted to the national joint council on January 28, did not come to the knowledge of area education committees until published in the March "L.G.S."

Referring to progress in his area, he said that

Discuss Examinations Bar, Staff Training

they had been particularly successful on the Southern provincial council. Although the staff side of the national joint council had suggested that those aged 35 with 15 years' service should be exempt from the promotion examination, the employers' side of the provincial council had said that ten years' service was long enough. The employers had also agreed that there was a case for certain intermediate examinations being accepted as alternatives to that examination.

A. S. ROBERTS, Holborn, remarked that it was his experience in the London area that many councils did not grant facilities because the staff did not ask for them.

Answering a question on the promotion examination, **J. W. MOSS, N.E.C.**, said that the staff side of the N.J.C. would try to persuade the employers to recognise a transitional period during which students already taking examinations of professional bodies were exempt from the promotion examination.

H. H. NASH, Sunderland, said that his council had resolved not to implement Charter paragraph 28 for at least twelve months. **F. TAYLOR, St. Helens**, added that none of his members were taking the promotion examination because they felt it had no status. Members in the treasurer's department were concerned only to pass the I.M.T.A. examinations, and borough treasurers recognised nothing else. To this, Mr. Odell replied

that the promotion examination had status as part of the Charter.

D. WEATHERALL, Seaham, who declared himself to be over 45 but "with less than 15 years' service," said he had just sat for the promotion examination and confessed to having found it "a grim ordeal." The time allowed for preparation was, he felt, too short. The N.E.C. should urge local education authorities promoting study courses for the examination to get off to a good start for the next session.

Asked whether he could give some assurance that NALGO's correspondence institute would cater for examinations suitable for public utility officers, Mr. Odell replied that the object of the institute was to provide facilities not otherwise available and that in the past it had always proved possible to meet members' needs where a sufficient number was involved.

DAVID EVANS, South Wales area education committee, striking a note of criticism, complained that, though he believed the correspondence institute to be very good, few people in South Wales had heard of it because it was so poorly advertised.

W. W. YEATES, Plymouth, speaking as a librarian, said he had heard with surprise statements that officers had persuaded their authorities to make grants for text-books. It was the local authority's job to provide text-books not only for local government officers but for members of every other profession. If there were any difficulty, members would help their librarian by bringing pressure to bear. There was no longer any shortage of text-books—at any rate, for a librarian who knew his job.

Should Public Relations Stress the Officer Rather than the Service?

THE redirection of NALGO's public relations policy was the main topic discussed at the meeting of branch and district public relations officers at the Town Hall, Bournemouth, on June 14.

E. H. MASON, retiring chairman of the N.E.C.'s public relations committee, declared that the back of the first part of their task had been broken. They could fairly claim that they had convinced the Government, the local authorities, the Press, the public, and their own members, of the value of public relations for local government, although they still had a long way to go to secure full acceptance of the doctrine in every area.

"But what of the future?" he asked. "Should we, now that our original aim is in part achieved, rest on our oars and be content to drift on the stream whose flow we have started? Or should we expand, adapt, and redirect our policy to fresh objectives?"

He was sure that they would reject the first suggestion. Public relations was far too valuable to be dropped just as it was beginning to produce results. It might well be, though, that the time had come to reconsider the policy. Should they, for example, begin to concentrate more directly on public relations for the local government officer rather than on public relations for the local government service?

This and similar questions were then considered by a brains trust under its question-master, **STEPHEN DUNCAN, P.R.O., Lancashire C.C.** The trust included Mr. Mason and five other experts representing four main points of view:

Of branches—R. RIDDELL, Wandsworth and P. P. ROSENFIELD, Ilford

Of districts—A. E. KAY, P.R.O., Metropolitan district committee;

Of local authorities—JM PHOENIX, Information Officer, Liverpool;

Of Headquarters—ALEC SPOOR, P.R.O., NALGO.

The questions put and answers given included:

Is NALGO laying too much stress on public relations for local government and too little on public relations for the officer? If so, how can the latter be developed?

NALGO has conducted public relations for the local government service which included the officer, and although it should now put more emphasis on the man running the service—his work, outlook, difficulties, achievements, and so on—it should do so with care to avoid giving the impression that public relations is merely a means of lining the local government officer's pocket.

Were it to give that impression, it would lose the goodwill of local authorities and might jeopardise much of what it had accomplished. The officer's work is of great interest to the public, though he often fails to realise it because he is immersed in detail and technicality. But if he could explain his work in "human" terms, he would find it interesting to the man in the street. Posters showing the officer at work and a symbol for the local government service would also help.

How can a comparatively junior officer convince his chief of the need for a public relations policy, including courtesy and accessibility to the public?

Overcoming opposition from a chief officer might take years (unless you can "catch 'em young and treat 'em rough!"), but constant patience and tact will have their effect, whilst an approach direct to the councillor would bring pressure from above. At national level, NALGO is endeavouring to interest the chief officers' associations. Chiefs are probably, on the whole, less apathetic than others. A campaign is wanted to induce all officers to support public relations.

Should a branch answer press criticism or misstatements about local government officers?

A serious misstatement should be corrected, but usually it is best to let drowsy dogs return to slumber. Criticism is often captious and lacking weight. We must not be too sensitive to it or magnify its effect. Some branches are on such good terms with the editor of their local newspaper that, whenever he gets a criticism of the local authority or its officers, he asks the branch P.R.O. to give him the other side of the picture. In that way unfounded criticism can often be nipped in the bud. Where a reply is necessary, it should be made by the branch rather than Headquarters, since Headquarters usually lacks the local knowledge to reply effectively without investigation—and that involves delaying the reply until it is too late. Headquarters can, however, give advice.

Does the publication of a civic news-sheet cut across the local newspaper?

The local newspaper will publish only news. If the news-sheet confines itself to articles, explanations of local authority policy, and elaborations of decisions already reported in the press—none of which are news—it need not clash with the local newspaper. Before embarking on the publication of such a news-sheet, the P.R.O. might well consult the local editor to explain its function and to gain his support.

Election of Honorary Officers & N.E.C.

THE result of the election of the Association's honorary officers and National Executive Council for 1948-49 is as follows (new members of the Council being marked with an asterisk):

HONORARY OFFICERS (all returned unopposed)

PRESIDENT: P. H. Harrold, town clerk, Hampstead;

VICE-PRESIDENTS: E. A. S. Young, assistant education officer, Willesden; E. L. Riley, establishment officer, Liverpool.

TRUSTEES: G. Llewelyn, chief clerk, county treasurer's department, Monmouthshire; T. Nolan, sub area accountant, Yorkshire electricity board; J. Pepper, establishment officer, East Midland electricity board.

HON. TREASURER: J. H. Robinson, F.I.M.T.A., F.S.A.A., city treasurer, Leeds.

HON. SOLICITORS: England, P. H. Harrold, town clerk, Hampstead; Wales, D. J. Parry, M.A., B.Sc., county clerk, Glamorgan; Scotland, R. McGill, county clerk, Moray and Nairn.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

METROPOLITAN—J. B. McCann, Ist. (a) asst., L.C.C., 9,098; W. Pitt-Steele, supt., Aldersbrook Homes, East Ham, 8,884; A. E. Odell, deputy town clerk, Poplar, 8,679; *T. D. Bradford, chief cashier, Hampstead, 8,215; *L. W. G. Hetherington, supt., electricity consumers, Wimbleton, 8,212; *R. B. Webb, establishment officer, Westminster, 7,368; W. Strother, borough engineer and surveyor, Bethnal Green, 7,078; J. W. Edmonds, clerical officer, P.L.A., 6,816; *L. G. Lambe, accounts assistant, Croydon, 6,585; *H. A. Jury, costing assistant, Wimbleton, 6,551; *P. P. Rosenfeld, engineering assistant, Ilford, 6,137.

NORTH WESTERN AND NORTH WALES—*A. F. Hutt, librarian, college of technology, Manchester, 11,694; E. L. Riley, establishment officer, Liverpool, 10,939; L. H. Taylor, 1st committee clerk, Salford, 10,231; J. S. Underwood, ch. auditor, Blackpool, 9,887; *S. Duncan, publicity officer, Lancashire, 9,124; *J. P. Phoenix, information officer, Liverpool, 8,275; *Miss J. A. Downton, ch. librarian, Preston, 7,576; *Miss M. Townson, asst.-in-charge welfare and records, transport department, Liverpool, 7,411; A. S. Garnett, supplies officer, engineer and surveyor's department, Liverpool, 7,231; H. Russell, secretary, gas department, Stockport, 7,194.

NORTH EASTERN—F. Bainbridge, committee clerk, Durham C.C., 4,174; J. Y. Fawcett, cashier, South Shields, 3,886; R. E. Heron, deputy director of education, Sunderland, 2,814; *A. Gallon, ch. clerk, city engineer's department, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 2,622.

YORKSHIRE—E. C. R. Chinn, accountancy asst., Huddersfield, 6,215; T. Nolan, sub area accountant, Yorkshire electricity board, 6,062; Miss E. Dawson, senior clerk, education department, Leeds, 5,903; W. R. Bevers, hospital steward, Sheffield, 5,585; E. M. Bourne, asst. accountant, Kingston-upon-Hull, 4,784; F. C. Corbishley, ch. clerk, city treasurer's department, York, 4,411; *A. Smith, ch. statistical officer, city treasurer's department, Sheffield, 4,376.

EAST MIDLAND—J. Pepper, establishment officer, East Midland electricity board, 4,852; G. T. Belton, rating and valuation officer and dep. clerk, Basford R.D., 4,303; R. Evans, clerk to Blackwell R.D., 3,946; *Miss F. E. Pole, secretary to general manager, transport department, Leicestershire, 3,830.

WEST MIDLAND—G. C. Martin, income tax officer, Birmingham, 6,490; *J. G. Jester, district public assistance officer, Birmingham, 5,698; H. R. Jones, senior accountancy asst., Wolverhampton, 4,868; A. Anderton, senior accountancy asst., Walsall, 4,508; Miss M. W. Curtin, matron, West Midland joint hospital board, 3,896; *Dr. Irene C. Hastilow, dep. M.O.H., Rowley Regis, 3,432.

EASTERN—E. F. Bacon, asst. education officer, Norfolk, 3,575; F. W. Goodchild, director of social welfare, Ipswich, 3,441; A. E. Nortrop, dep. borough education officer, Luton, 3,418;

*A. H. Aubertin, admin. officer, roads and bridges department, East Suffolk C.C., 2,014.

SOUTH EASTERN—N. W. Bingham, senior asst. (welfare), Kent education committee, 4,816; W. A. N. Baker, ch. sanitary inspector, Maidstone, 4,284; S. C. Wellington, admin. clerk in charge, school health services, West Sussex, 3,848; *J. M. Delves, clerk to Tenterden R.D., 2,491.

SOUTHERN—J. W. Moss, divisional education officer, Bucks C.C., 2,960; E. R. Davies, dep. clerk, Berks C.C., 2,161; *B. W. H. Heptinstall, senior clerk, Bournemouth district service centre, Southern electricity board, 1,694; *F. N. Nuon, supt. social welfare officer, Portsmouth, 1,597.

SOUTH WESTERN—G. R. Ashton, clerk and ch. financial officer, Keynsham U.D., 3,616; C. J. Newman, town clerk, Exeter, 3,038; R. T. Shears, principal asst., clerk's department, Devon C.C., 2,821; *A. E. Kell, asst. ch. clerk, Bristol electricity, 2,369.

SOUTH WALES AND MON.—L. Bevan, clerk and steward, Hensol Castle, M. D. Colony, Glamorgan, 3,903; H. W. John, senior clerical asst., city engineer's department, Cardiff, 3,269; G. Llewelyn, ch. clerk, county treasurer's department, Monmouthshire, 3,198.

SCOTTISH—S. H. Brodie, establishment officer, South West Scotland electricity board, 7,835; R. Adams, divisional supervisor, assessor's department, Edinburgh, 5,366; J. Penny, ch. asst., city assessor's department, Dundee, 5,257; *T. Stewart, chief accountant, Inverness C.C., 4,988; D. Galbraith, chief cashier, Paisley, 4,847.

TWO ARBITRATION VICTORIES

THE National Arbitration Tribunal recently awarded in favour of the Association's claims against: Brentford and Chiswick borough council, which had refused to adopt the Charter in full, imposing a bar at age 25 in the General Division, reserving its right to call for special assessment reports more frequently than the charter provided, denying first-class rail travel to senior officers, and adopting the remaining provisions with effect from January 1, 1947, instead of April 1, 1946; and Brierley Hill U.D. which refused to observe the recommendation of a provincial council disputes committee.

The Tribunal decided that Brentford and Chiswick must apply the Charter in its entirety with effect from April 1, 1946, and that Brierley Hill must accept the decisions of the disputes committee.

Obituary

We regret to record the deaths of three former leaders of the Association:

E. W. B. Abbott—formerly director of education, Maidstone, chairman of the S.E. district and N.E.C. education committees 1918-32, and vice-president of the Association, 1927-1932.

W. H. Whinnerah—formerly secretary, highways department, Manchester, member N.E.C. 1919-1937, chairman N.A.L.G.O. Provident Society 1927-37, and one-time trustee of N.A.L.G.O. and member national and provincial joint councils.

S. Whitehead—formerly borough treasurer, Hammersmith, N.A.L.G.O. honorary treasurer 1943-45, secretary Hastings branch 1913-15, president Hammersmith branch 1933-35, and treasurer Metropolitan district 1936-43.

Ancillaries' Year of Great Activity

Points made by the chairmen of N.A.L.G.O.'s ancillaries at the annual general meetings at the Town Hall, Bournemouth, on June 18, are reported below. A. PINCHES spoke for the Building Society, SAM LORD for LOGOMIA, and T. NOLAN for the Provident Society.

Building Society's Progress

DURING the year, the N.A.L.G.O. Building Society's assets increased by £630,000 to £5,872,000, and its unappropriated profit and reserves to £142,504—a most satisfactory position.

The year before, the demands on the Society's funds had been so great that nearly £2 million was advanced, as a result of which the Society had to borrow more from its bankers than members would have wished. To rectify that state of affairs, the amount of fresh loans made during the first half of 1947 was restricted but, by July, the position had so improved that it was possible to renew advances of up to 80 per cent. of the value or purchase price of property on which a loan was sought. The possibility that the Society might be able to offer even higher advances would depend on the continued flow of investments into the Society's funds.

Negotiations with LOGOMIA for the inauguration of a combined endowment and house purchase scheme, under which borrowers would derive a saving in income tax, were completed and proposals would be accepted shortly.

More Business for Logomia

LOGOMIA's new business had shown a marked increase over the year. Its total funds had increased by £74,000 from £991,000 to £1,065,000 and investments had yielded the satisfactory interest rate of £3 13s 1d. per cent. overall. A bonus at the rate of five per cent. per annum had been declared on shares for the three years ending December 31, 1947.

Progress had been made in each department as follows:

Life—967 policies—146 more than in the year before—had been issued; and death claims had decreased from 37, involving £8,750, in 1946, to 27, involving £8,000 in 1947.

Fire and Householders' Risks—3,041 new comprehensive insurances had been issued; 22,471 policies in force on December 31 last represented an annual premium income of £27,931; and claims had increased by £2,561 to £10,385, largely as a result of the increased cost of replacing damaged articles.

Fidelity and General—The fidelity and general account, including burglary insurance, had increased by £3,020 to £17,894.

With the introduction of the National Insurance (Industrial Injuries) Act, 1946, and the repeal of the Workmen's Compensation Acts, certain alterations would be made in the householders' comprehensive bonus policies and extended cover granted in other directions without increase in the premium rate.

Motor—Insurers generally had sustained heavy losses during the year, and premium rates had had to be increased. However, N.A.L.G.O.'s premiums were lower, and its cover wider, than those of most insurance offices.

Although the figures for the past year indicated steady progress, still greater endeavours by all concerned were essential if the Association were to compete effectively with larger companies.

Provident Society's Drive

SUCCESSFUL efforts had been made to increase the membership of all the N.A.L.G.O. Provident Society's schemes. The fact that national insurance benefits would, in most cases, be deducted from an officer's salary during sickness proved this continued for the Society. The Society was equal to the challenge of the new Acts and would not only maintain, but, if and when necessary, extend its benefits in furtherance of its aim to provide members with a complete service.

Hospital and nursing home scheme benefits paid during the year amounted to £9,033 and contributions received, £9,020. There was, however, no reason to believe that this represented the future trend between income and expenditure; claims since the end of the year showed a marked fall.

It was too early to assess the full effect of the National Health Service Act, but the committee of management would watch the position and consider the need for such changes in the provisions of all the Society's schemes as would not weaken its stability or the members' security. The Society's rules already provided for a reduction to 1s. 7d. of the monthly contribution to the hospital and nursing home scheme where cover against doctor's fees was no longer required.

Distinguished Contributors

Some of the leading writers of the day are among the contributors to the Regent Institute's well-known Postal Course in Effective English and Personal Efficiency.

The new Course, which is based on many years' experience with students in all parts of the English-speaking world, offers complete training in the art of effective expression.

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The many letters on file at the
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who have taken the Postal Course in
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cency. A few extracts:

"The Course has given me more confidence in my abilities. It has been throughout a source of interest and enjoyment. I shall keep the sons and refer to them whenever doubt or need of encouragement."

"I wish to express my gratitude for all that I have learned, and for the fact that I now have greater confidence in myself and in my future. I am no longer afraid to press myself in company."

"I regard this Course as a very sound investment. Outstanding among the benefits I have derived is the confidence I now feel in my ability to express myself clearly and effectively. I believe that when I decided to embark upon this Course, made a very real step towards the attainment of my ambition."

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"I recommend this Course to you, irrespective of age or station. You may use my recommendation in any way which will bring this valuable course of study to the notice of the public."

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Not only ambitious workers of all kinds but professional men and women among those who recognise the value of the original and stimulating system of training offered by the Course in Effective English and Personal Efficiency.

They are mostly busy people, and they find that the Regent method meets their demand for clear, fascinating instruction that can be mastered in the odd minutes of the day. The main subjects covered by the tuition are:

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How to Converse Fluently.
How to Speak in Public.
How to Develop Literary Taste.
Everyday Errors in English.
Words Commonly Misspelt.
Words Frequently Mispronounced.
How to Punctuate Correctly.

Is Your English a Handicap?

By HUGH DRAYTON

THOUSANDS of men and women are handicapped because they cannot speak and write English correctly.

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- Do you fail to influence others?
- Are you a poor conversationalist?
- Do you commit embarrassing errors in speech and writing?
- Are you unable to make your points effectively?

For these and similar weaknesses the Regent Course in Effective English and Personal Efficiency provides a thorough remedy.

You are not required to memorise tedious lists of rules. Not only do you learn how to avoid the errors that are most commonly made in the use of English, but you are shown how to increase your vocabulary and how to express yourself persuasively and forcefully.

The tuition is within the reach of all; the moderate fee can be paid by convenient instalments.

"Word Mastery," the prospectus of the Course, explains fully the importance of good English to you, and describes how you can acquire the power of vivid and fluent expression—at the cost of a few minutes' study a day. This interesting booklet, which can be obtained free from the Regent Institute, should be in the hands of every ambitious man and woman.

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THE Regent way to the mastery of English is the sure way and the swift way.

The Effective English Course is so planned that you make definite progress from the very first lesson. The tuition will show you how to speak and write correctly and to use words fluently and expressively. It will give you confidence and enable you to make the right impression on others.

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"Words are tools, the most amazing and important yet invented by the human brain. Lack of them may be as fatal to your progress in certain endeavours as leaden feet or untutored hands would be in other endeavours. Lack of knowledge of how to use words is as great a handicap to a writer or speaker as is ignorance of how to combine bricks and mortar to a mason."—The late GEO. A. DORSEY (a famous psychologist).

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STAMPEDE AT BOURNEMOUTH



by "JASPER"

HAD Ernest not been elected to the N.E.C., it would have been a much better Conference. On the other hand, I should not have been there. But let me begin at the beginning.

For years Ernest has been, hinting that the Branch should nominate him for the N.E.C. We just laughed at the idea until last March, when he issued an ultimatum. If we did not nominate him, he said, it would be his duty to return the Branch duplicator to the local Boys' Brigade Headquarters, whence he had borrowed it in 1937. With the annual outing looming ahead, not to mention the annual dinner (and you cannot expect members of the Executive, on the top table to pay for their wine while our Council guests are knocking it back for nothing), we knew that Branch funds would not run to buying a duplicator, so we surrendered, unconditionally. We did not think he had a hope of being elected, but we did not realise to what lengths he was prepared to go. Apparently, a number of branches had circularised the candidates, asking for their views on affiliation. Ernest did a lot of detective work and gave each branch the answer it wanted—so late that they couldn't compare notes. He came seventh in the poll, and as our District has seven seats this year, he was in.

He insisted that we should stay at a decent hotel at Bournemouth. His position demanded it, he explained. Besides, he added as an after-thought, N.E.C. expenses are 6s. a day above Charter rates. But our first evening was rather spoilt by the fact that Ernest would keep bowing right and left to everyone we saw with an old look or a shiny suit. They must be NALGO delegates, he explained, and he had to cultivate his constituents.

We each had a double ticket for the reception on Monday night, and Ernest brought a shy red-haired young constituent who was dazzled by the attentions of a member of the N.E.C. All went well until about half-way through, when I saw Ernest talking to one of the Headquarters officers. After that he disappeared—until just before the end, when I saw him walking past unsteadily. "So there is an N.E.C. room," I thought crossly.

He didn't return, so I had to see his constituent home. Luckily I found she was not so shy when away from the glamour of the N.E.C. When I got back to our hotel, feeling quite chirpy, Ernest was sitting on his bed biting his nails and studying the Conference agenda. He gave a hollow groan when I came in.

"I don't suppose you've ever read this."

"Of course I have," I replied. "We've been through it at least half a dozen times."

"A fat lot of good that does," he muttered. "Look at Item 5."

I looked. "Just one of those fiddling things the N.E.C. does to rules," I said.

"Moron," he muttered, "if that passes, I'm not on the N.E.C. until Item 225 is reached."

"So what?" I said. "The platform seats are always uncomfortable, and, anyhow, there's nothing you can do about it."

"Oh, isn't there?" said Ernest darkly, and turned his face to the wall.

Next day I was up early and booked three seats in the centre of the Conference Hall. Ernest arrived later and hardly paused to greet his con-

stituent before bolting over to the right-hand side of the Hall. He came back, borrowed my copy of the accounts, and vanished to the other side, returning just as Conference began.

The opening proceedings were in accordance with well-defined practice. The President's speech was notable, I thought, in that it displayed personal social philosophy. If ever Ernest or I were President, I felt, the address would merely reflect the majority opinion of the N.E.C. and would smell accordingly.

Next came Ernest's Item 5, which deferred the appointment of the new N.E.C. until Conference had done its worst to the old one. This motion seemed to have only one dissentient, a lone hand near the front on the right. I tried to point this out to Ernest, but he was not in his seat. Mr. Robinson, the honorary treasurer, then dealt with the accounts, but before he dealt, he shuffled. For twelve minutes he amused Conference with a prologue dedicated to the theory that, if you pay 750 guineas to a firm of auditors, it is more important for members to realise that their treasurer is a human being and no fool, rather than that his accounts add up right and no fooling. Half-way through, he asked Conference if it had had enough. Among the roars of "No!" I was sure I heard a faint "Yes" from somewhere near the front on the left.

Then we got down to business, and from the start it was apparent that some delegates realised that they had only three days in which to dispose of 285 items. Normally, the unofficial closure of stamping feet is applied on the last day only. This time it was starting before Conference was properly in its stride. At first it was hardly noticeable, and might well have been one man shuffling accidentally somewhere near the front.

Four items in succession suggested new titles for the Association—N.A.P.S.O., N.U.P.S.O., A.N.A.L.G.O., and N.A.L.G.O.A.—and I was glad when they were all rejected. One could hardly be enthusiastic about an Association whose title sounded like an infant toilet soap, a marriage bureau, a cheap pain-killer, or a soft drink.

Manchester continued Hutt's Holy War for economic parity with banks and insurance companies. Another son of Manchester appeared to speak strongly in favour of a motion on public utilities, finally pronounced against it, and was out-voted by his apparent supporters. Manchester and England were obviously working on different days on this occasion.

By now I was becoming rather worried about Ernest's constant appearances and disappearances, but it was not until late in the afternoon that I connected them with the outbreaks of stamping from one or other flank of the Hall. At the adjournment I hastily parked the red-head constituent (who couldn't understand why I called her Connie, instead of Muriel) and tackled Ernest.

"Look here, Ernest, don't be a fool," I said. "One man can't hurry up a Conference."

"Oh, can he?" he replied resolutely. "Don't forget there are quite a few new people on the N.E.C. this year."

I must admit that for the next two days my attention was divided. Even during the ritual affiliation debate, I kept waiting for signs of Ernest and his cohorts. They shuffled tentatively and were silenced. They waited and then

came again and, finally, effected a closure which aborted at least a dozen flights of expense earning oratory.

Conference was as logical as ever, rejecting affiliation by two to one, deciding by about ten to one to hold a ballot on it; and then insisting, on a card vote of 81,000 to 67,000, to require at least 85,000 votes to make an affiliation order "stick."

The inquest on the arbitration award brought forth a masterly speech by Dr. Bevan, who proudly declared that his ambition was to hitch his wagon to a star while keeping one foot on the floor. After that, the relatives of the deceased meekly thanked him for his attention, hoped he would save his next patient, and jettisoned dozen critical riders, ranging from "wilful murder" to "schizophrenic manslaughter" to Ernest's great satisfaction.

Scores of motions followed designed to explain to the N.E.C. that members wanted more money earlier and easier, but most were defeated through disagreements as to how much more and how much easier. The same fate befell motion to abolish the promotion bar, and Ernest (who has failed once more in the I.M.T.A. Part) said sourly that the only thing the opponent could pass was all understanding.

It was Ernest who introduced the first note of reality I have yet seen on the question of sex equality. Miss Hamilton, of Glasgow, was wheedling Conference successfully when down on the right was heard a faint sound of stamping. In mid-sentence she stopped, said "Och, ay (or was it "O.K.")?", and with a flick of her finger bolted from the mike. Womanlike, she

AFFILIATION BALLOT

IN SEPTEMBER

How Members will Vote

The Ballot of members on NALGO's affiliation to the T.U.C., agreed by Conference, will be held in September.

It will be based on membership as at July 31, 1948, and only those who were members of the Association on that date will be eligible to vote.

Branch secretaries have been asked to send to district officers a certified return of branch membership on July 31.

Voting cards, based on this return, will be sent to each branch early in September. Each card will be addressed, with postage prepaid. Members are asked to record their votes and post the card themselves to Headquarters not later than September 30.

In accordance with the resolution of Conference, the ballot will result in affiliation only if a majority of members—i.e. more than 50 per cent. of the total membership as at July 31—vote in favour.

came back later to have the last word and carry her motion easily. But if those feet belonged to others besides Ernest and his caucus, it looks as if equality is on the way!

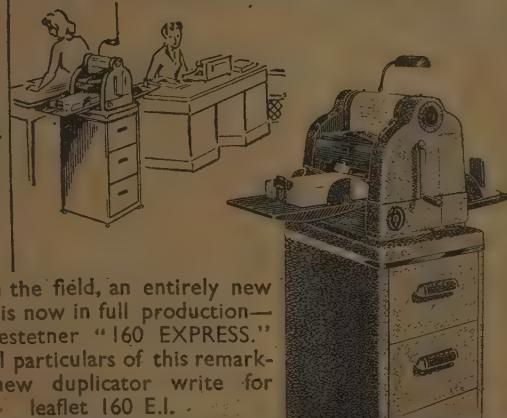
It must have been about an hour from the scheduled close of the Conference when we finally disposed of the Annual Report, and whispered to Ernest "any minute now, and you're on." I spoke too soon. A delegate from South Wales then rose to thank the N.E.C. and the honorary officers for their year's work. He was, however, no brief thanksgiving, and by virtue of his subject he could not be stamped off. Eventually he was clapped off—a sheer inspiration of Ernest's, that!—and within two minutes my colleague was sitting, triumphant but still worried, at the back of the platform.

As I took Connie out for a cup of tea, I met the officer from H.Q., and mentioned how eager Ernest had been to join the elect. He thought for a moment, and then said: "That bloke on the back row, with glasses? Oh, I remember telling him the other night that he wasn't really entitled to expenses until he was formally elected. He must have taken me literally!"

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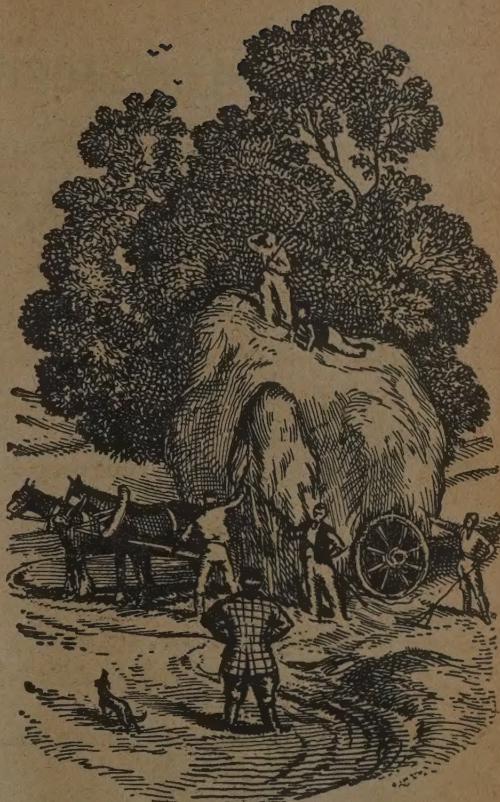
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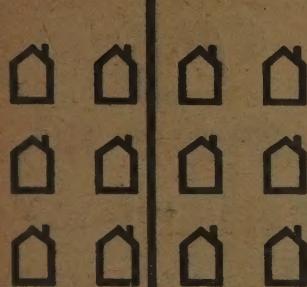


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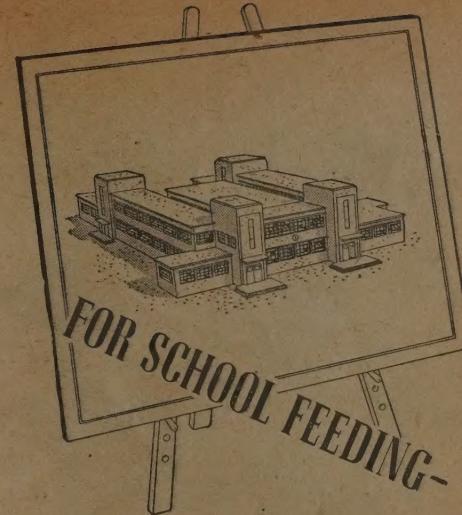
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